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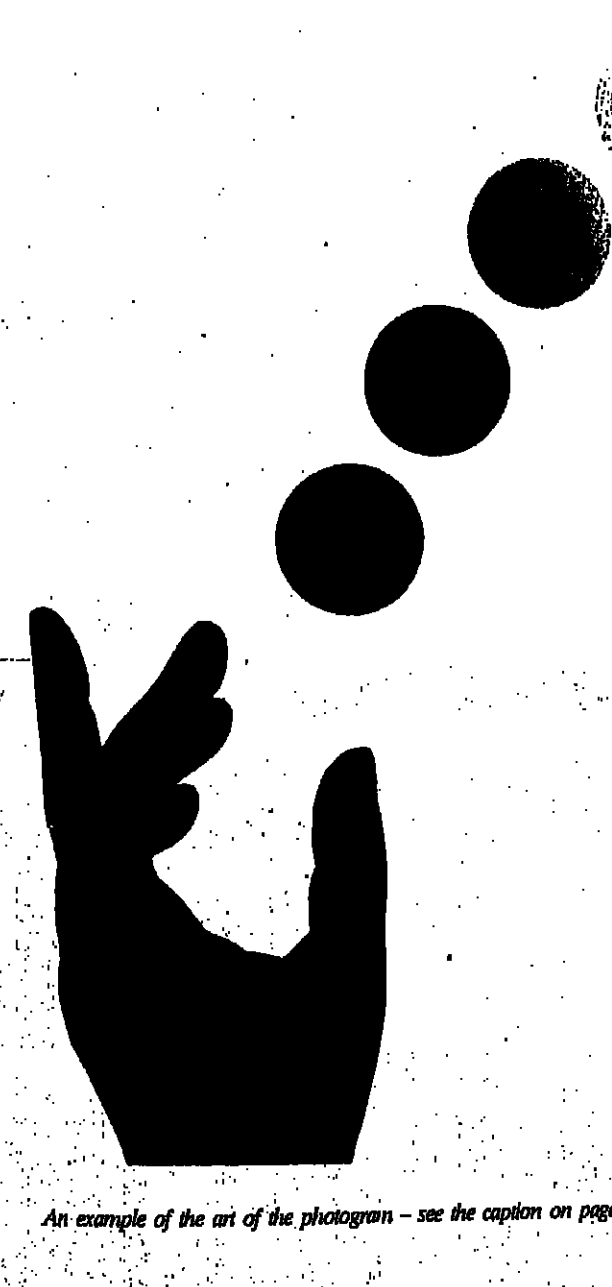
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Things the PR man forgot to say

By E. S. Turner

MILTON MOSKOWITZ, MICHAEL KATZ, ROBERT LEVERING: *Everybody's Business* An Almanac 916pp. Harper and Row. £12.95. 0 06 250620 X

The authors of this massive exercise in "irreverence" say they are out "not so much to muckrake" as to pierce the reclusiveness of American big business and point to what is really distinctive about each major company. If, despite the best intentions, muck keeps sticking to the rake, and Company A is demonstrably a "mob-related" scoff law, and Company B has errant directors sentenced to perform community work, and Company C is forced to hire an actress to apologize for a year on television for its false advertising claims, then so much more fun for the rest of us.

The book is everybody's business in the sense that it contains grist for the radical, the ecologist, the Third Worlder and the seeker-out of discrimination as well as valuable pointers for those who are keen to make a quick million or two without actually shutting the gates of mercy on mankind; it has ammunition for both friends and foes of multinationals; it is a fine source for social historians; it contains plots, murders, and plots for the novelist; it tells the *Guinness Book of Records* a thing or two; it has treasures for the "did you know?" addict (did you know that Birdseye and Mars were real people?); and it even yields stories for the after-dinner speaker (like the one about Harry Cohn, of Columbia Pictures, who stormed at his college-educated writers for sprinkling the script of a thirteenth-century romance with "Yes, siree" - which turned out to be "Yes, siree").

More than 300 companies are featured, many of them no doubt unwillingly. Among them is the Nestlé colossus, though it is primarily a Swiss enterprise. One entry, at least, seems to have been included as a tease, in the way that Hilary Rubinstein inserted two or three fictitious establishments in his *Good House Guide*. The difference is that the *Harbour Freight Fuel Company* does exist, but is no more than an unremarkable filling station on Long Island, employing two full-time and two part-time workers, with annual profits of \$38,000. The dead-end account of it is sandwiched between entries on Gulf (profits: \$1.3 billion) and Mobil (\$2 billion). Perhaps this is where the editors and leading contributors (people like Kirk Nicolson and Mitch Paradise) top up their tanks at weekends.

If the inclusion of this tidder suggests that the book is compiled by irresponsible *faucets*, the impression must be resisted. The wealth of hard-won facts and statistics is dazzling. America spends \$95 million annually on prepped corn. Resorts International runs the world's largest floating crap game. Firestone had the biggest-ever tyre recall. Consolidated Foods ranks No 1 in pantyhose. General Mills is No 1 in toys. Tampax is No 1 in menstrual protection. And so on, for 900 pages.

The sub-headers to each entry include: "What They Do", "History", "Who Owns and Runs the Company", "Reputation", and "In the Public Eye". It is easy to see whether the company has any black or female directors and not too difficult to find firms which have cleverly combined the black and the female in one person. The first black director of American Express persuaded his board to discontinue loans to the South African Government. Hershey Foods employs a woman banker who is thirty-fifth Treasurer of the United States. The black-jacked Marriott Corporation has a director who wrote a manual instructing department heads how to shift Democrats into meaningless jobs.

Under "Reputation" are assessments, sometimes rather witty ones, like "Confidential is probably the most effective of the cardboard breed manufacturers" or "Standard Brands used to be known as 'dull'. Now they're just

regarded as confused" or "... the foremost killer among American coal mines in 1972 ... Consolidation's record for deaths is phenomenal ..."

"In The Public Eye" is where one reads about anti-discrimination suits (against Pepsi-Cola, *Reader's Digest* and the *Washington Post*, among others), violations of cease and desist orders, evasions of taxes and sanctions, questionable gifts, infringement actions and pollution wrangles. The record is not all negative. There are companies solemnly stogging away at "affirmative action programmes" (in respect of hiring minorities) and doing all sorts of "neighbourly things", like buying and running sports teams. The Prudential right now has it in its power to decide whether to let the city of Newark die, or to do the neighbourly thing. Henry Ford II has been trying hard to save down-town Detroit.

There is a lives-of-the-saints fascination about the crisply summarized careers of the early go-getters like Gail Borden (the great condenser, who urged his pastor to condense his sermons), the Lutheran Heinz, the Menominee Hershey and the Seventh Day Adventist Kellogg. William Dunforth, begotten of Purina High Octane Baby Pig Chow and Purina Horse Chow Checkers, was a strong Bible man who also believed in callisthenics for his workers. He died at eighty-two waiting for his own Christian Caroler to sing outside his door. How he would have despised today's young executives at McDonald's, who apparently lie on water-beds in a think tank dreaming up things like Triple Ice Cream.

Harley Proctor, originator of Ivory Soap, hit on the word ivory in church, while listening to the forty-fifth Psalm. However, the public were wary of Biblical tie-ups; they rejected Elijah's Manah when it was launched by Charles W. Post, but bought it when it was renamed Post Toasties.

Some of the most impressive material in these pages concerns attempts by companies to retain directors convicted in the courts. The firm of Fruehauf, trailer manufacturers, is described as "the only corporation in America whose chairman and president had to report to probation officers." Originally the two had been sentenced to go on tax evasion charges and had resigned, though their seats on the board were kept open. In a notice to shareholders the firm (profits: \$88.7 million) listed twenty-eight American executives convicted of crimes, of whom half had been kept on the strength, and argued that the two directors on probation should enjoy a like privilege. "While there is currently an increasing trend towards strict adherence to principles of public morality," wrote the company's special counsel, "it cannot be said that it must always override all other considerations." His realistic words clearly impressed the shareholders, for when a mother complained at a company meeting that leniency towards these offenders was setting the young a bad example she was overwhelmingly outvoted.

The makers of the Barbie doll, the

first doll with pronounced breasts, also had a brush with the law. Forty-one sentences on two directors, a man and a woman, for juggling the accounts were committed to 500 hours of charitable work spread over five years. The woman director withdrew to start another business, still bosom-oriented. To promote her prosthetic breasts for mastectomy patients she wrote them, by feeling, to decide which breast was real. There are not many reference books which follow through with information like this.

Many of our own captains of industry could read *Everybody's Business* with advantage, not so much to learn how to subvert governments or move factories out of reach of the unions, but to see what sort of pronouncements a resolute and united board with the courage of its grievances can get away with. Which British insurance company will be the first to run an advertising campaign, like that of Aetna, attacking juries for awarding huge sums in malpractice and accident suits? Which chairman is ready to follow the Union Camp spokesmen who told carping environmentalists: "It probably won't hurt mankind a whole hell of a lot in the long run if the whooping crane doesn't quite make it?"

Those who would flinch from saying such things would also presumably flinch from emulating the famous last stand by the boss of Montgomery Ward, who is shown in a splendid photograph being borne from his offices, smugly defiant, in a sort of fireman's lift by two GIs on the order of President Roosevelt for failing to settle a strike. The year: 1944.

The section on food, which includes foodless food, is pretty hypnotic stuff. A company scientist responsible for sauce mixes and gravy mixes also holds a patent for a shark repellent, possibly one of his flavouring failures. The artificial flavours injected into cheeses include "tarry repulsive", "choking" and - for the really sophisticated - "fecal". For the less sophisticated there is always Dawn Fresh gravy.

Is modern food good for us? We learn, without too much surprise, that a lawyer defending a man charged with double murder in San Francisco decided that his client's mental capacity had been diminished by "wolfing down junk food - Coke, Twinkles, doughnuts, candy bars." The man was acquitted of murder, but not of voluntary manslaughter. The authors decline to pronounce on whether a well-known chain constitutes a "menacing fast food monoculture", while acquitting it on charges of putting ground worms in the hamburgers.

Although America may be an open society, many big corporations excel at protecting their privacy (booked into this will hardly encourage them to lower their guard). The Engelhard Minerals Corporation is "undoubtedly the nation's largest company without a public relations department", but there seem to be other aspirants to the title. It is possible to sympathize with an old-fashioned company unwilling to

A photograph of Oscar Wilde by Sarony of New York, signed and inscribed to the American actress Clara Morris. "From her sincere admirer, January 1882. Wilde knew Clara Morris by reputation and set her a copy of *Vera*, or the Nihilists in 1882. He met her several times during his American visit and was eager for her to play in *Vera*, but she proved to be 'difficult' and the idea came to nothing. The photograph is included in a collection of *Pin Books and Manuscripts* which is currently on exhibition at Sotheby Parka Bann, 171 East 84 St, New York (until May 4) and will be sold by auction on Wednesday May 6.

bare its secrets to a reporter from *Mother Jones*, the San Francisco progressive monthly. The Hallmark greeting card company has loyal employees who fend off reporters, knowing that only a "smart ass" piece will result. What lets companies down is the executive who talks too much. A marketing man told his audience: "Replique, don't innovate. Someone else has gone and done your homework for you. They have taken the risk, the time and spent the dollars." The result was an infringement suit from a rival. A Heinz man had more sensible advice for the non-innovative: "In many ways the best way to get into new product development is to take over some other guy's idea by buying the company."

The entries are interspersed with lively magazine-type articles on freakish events in the annals of business; for example, the account of the trouble caused in the early days of Levi jeans

by a copper rivet at the crotch which became painfully hot when a cowboy knelt before a fire. There is a useful listing of the "top ten corporate air forces", with 232 aircraft between them, mostly belonging to the oil men.

The authors are alert for irony. They note that the most successful magazine in America is dedicated to the abolition of the reading habit. Walter Annenberg's TV Guide, with a weekly sale of twenty million, they are suitably amused, as others were, that a meat packing company should have bought Living Bra. Rarely, however, do they initiate wisecracks; they would not, themselves, have likened the taste of Coca-Cola to "sucking the leg of a recently massaged athlete", but they will gratefully lift the comparison from its Italian source. While they are free for its early Times-style they really tend to people as silver-tongued, grand-voiced, bald and balding; our own Les Milford is "the twinkly-eyed Oakland muckraker." Their prose can be admirably economical, as when they describe what the unions did at the *Washington Post* as "trashing the newsroom". It is the British reader's hard luck if he does not understand phrases like "plentiful as porpoises" or "unfamiliar with 'the Slim Jim' junk business" or "is uncertain what a company is up to when it is 'heavily into casino skims'".

Mr Moskowitz and his crew have one villainous stylistic fault which springs from a decision to refer to companies as "they". The result is innumerable sentences like "Campbell Soup matches to a tune of their own" and even "A giant that hasn't been able to manage their own business". The publishers should have slapped a cease and desist order on this practice and ensured that it was not violated.

And what is the reputation of Harper and Row, who have done such a good job of producing for their critical authors? It is that of a bastion of traditional publishing, though recently its board somehow paid more than was sensible for Lippincott. Fortunately the firm "is in no danger of going under".

Or

To step out into the drying garden.
Or rest grovelling under the swarming branches.
The question rests in its own equivoque.
And the reader, out of its great indifference,
Dropt of Sigmund's the sparkling sunlight,
Here, or upon the antique Malvern Hills,
Will choose Capricious, and Polony.

To turn the first page of the great unread.
Or idle, down a long-familiar margin.
The finger knows direction as they move,
And we will take their curious attention
Closely, in heart, observe the Brimstone's flight.
Who must explore mansions of air and light,
For his crisp yellow is definitive.

To follow shadow's course along the hill.
Or lift the eye to dazzle of plain sky.
We wake to ceremonial chorals, find
Each blade of grass resolving Hamlet's question.
An old car faded to the border dew,
These flowers, half-remembered and appropriate,
On a May morning, the word is golden.

Peter Scupham



Veneration made vulgar

By Jonathan Sumption

PETER BROWN: *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* 187pp. SCM Press. £6.95. 0 334 00285 0

The cult of saints, in one form or another, is a feature of almost every religion with a mass following. The great shrines of Mecca and Karbala are not the only Islamic shrines, although they may be the only reputable ones. At the margins of Jewish orthodox spiritual heroes have been venerated at their tombs, and among Christians, even Protestants are not immune. The Quaker leader George Fox, who died in 1691, drew few pilgrims to his shrine but he left a *Book of Miracles* recording more than a hundred and fifty marvellous feats for the edification of his followers.

Most Protestants have, however, implicitly endorsed the conclusion which David Hume reached two centuries ago that the cult of saints is a form of polytheism conditioned by the intellectual limitations of the masses: "the vulgar, that is indeed all mankind a few excepted", Hume loftily called them. Applying Hume's views to the early history of Christianity Edward Gibbon pronounced a theory which has ever since held the field: the cult of saints, with its attendant panoply of feast-days, relics and pilgrimages, was a symptom of the corruption of the Christian Church which occurred when it sought, after the peace of Constantine, to become a mass religion. It found itself obliged to sink to the level of the least sensitive of its potential converts.

The imagination, which had been misled by a painful effort to the contemplation and worship of the Universal Cause, eagerly embraced such inferior objects of devotion as were more proportioned to its gross conceptions and imperfect faculties. The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christians was gradually corrupted; and the monarchy of heaven, already clouded by metaphysical subtleties, was degraded by the introduction of a popular mythology, which tended to restore the reign of polytheism.

This passage is quoted by Peter Brown as a succinct statement of what he calls the "two tier model" of religious history, a model which this book is devoted to proving superficial and wrong.

I shall have something to say about Professor Brown's argument in a moment, but before finally leaving Gibbon, it has to be said that when stripped of its patronizing tone and pejorative overtones, his theory expresses one incontrovertible truth: the cult of the saints was not part of the spiritual baggage of the very early Church. The earliest literary record of it is the account of the martyrdom of Polycarp of Smyrna in 156, which Eusebius reproduced in his *Ecclesiastical History*. Until the third century there is very little evidence that the cult was widespread and its full flowering dates from the beginning of the next. Even that pillar of Roman Catholic orthodoxy the *Dei Veritate* *Catholicus* is constrained to admit that the evidence of its early history is to be found in later tradition and may therefore be the contributor to disarming scepticism, be believed by Gibbon or not by historians.

After the cult had become established it took some time to become part of the scheme of Christian worship. In its infancy the veneration of saints was confined to martyrs, and martyrs of the local community. Every church honoured and commemorated the heroes of what was its own history. The veneration of distant martyrs and of the Virgin Mary, who had not suffered martyrdom at all but witnessed the birth of Christ, were late developments.

The doctrine of intercession, which marks the point where veneration became worship, was substantially the creation of Origen and Cyprian of Carthage, both writing in the mid-third century. But the miracles which God performed through his saints (the ultimate extreme to which the doctrine of intercession went) did not become an important feature of Christian life until the period with which Professor Brown is principally concerned, the late fourth and fifth centuries, the age of Ambrose, Augustine and Paulinus of Nola.

Gibbon was right, then, to point out that the cult of the saints dates from a period when Christianity was rapidly expanding, and seeking to make itself attractive to more than the lower middle class of the eastern cities who had previously set the tone. The question is whether this was a coincidence. Although he does not actually say so, it is implicit in Professor Brown's account of the cult that it was.

Popular religion in late antiquity has to be studied at many removes. The sources have obvious limitations, and "the vulgar" hardly ever speak through them in their own words. Professor Brown is therefore obliged to found himself primarily on the poetry and theological writings of the literate elite, who were not always particularly observant of the doings of their inferiors, nor particularly understanding of their thoughts. And the conclusion which these sources naturally suggest to him is that the love and veneration of "dead human beings" (as they are called throughout this book) was shared by the most educated, sensitive and intelligent members of the Christian community as well as by illiterate enthusiasts. Indeed Professor Brown suggests that the initiative was theirs.

That educated Christians wrote about the saints with genuine feeling is beyond question. The poems which Paulinus of Nola wrote in honour of St Felix are among the great monuments of Christian Latin poetry. Paulinus was a silly, superstitious man, but by no stretch of the imagination could this rich, cultivated nobleman who was converted in Gaul and ended his days as bishop of Nola, be numbered among Hume's "vulgar". Prudentius, the other notable poet of the early cult of saints, was plainly a man of considerable intellectual powers, who had been a successful barrister and civil servant. Indeed, the rituals of the cult of saints were derived from the manners and courtesies of aristocratic Roman society, and from its burial customs. These were things that men like Paulinus and Prudentius knew at first hand.

What Professor Brown proves by this is that the cult of saints has never been an exclusively proletarian affair. In their veneration of the saints the elite of the Church differed from the "vulgar" in the manner of expressing it, although not significantly in any other respect. But Professor Brown has not refuted Gibbon, because Gibbon was not suggesting that the "vulgar" had parted company with the elite. His point was that the "vulgar" had dragged the elite down to their level, and that the aristocratic language and ceremonies at the feasts of the saints were merely the icing on a very coarse cake.

There is an overwhelming body of evidence in favour of this view, of which the most interesting is perhaps to be found in the writings of Professor Brown's particular hero, St Augustine. Augustine's treatise *On the True Faith*, written in about 390, asserts that the age of miracles had passed, and some of his sermons against the Donatist heretics of North Africa are particularly scathing about their veneration of relics, particles of dust from the Holy Land and the like. Yet towards the end of his life there is a change: "Among his late sermons is one addressed to a crowd drawn to Hippo by just such a parcel of dust from the Holy Land. The last two books of *The City of God* are filled with accounts of the miracles wrought in and around Hippo by the relics of St Stephen, children's tables;

which Augustine relates with evident enthusiasm.

What had changed Augustine's mind was the success of popular heresies, particularly Donatism, in North Africa during the forty years which he spent at Hippo. In the twenty-second book of *The City of God* he was quite explicit about the reason for his new-found enthusiasm for miracles. They were dramatic demonstrations of the power of God to unbelievers; and to heretics also because they were wrought by relics preserved in Catholic churches in the custody of the Catholic clergy.

Augustine's devotion to St Stephen was much more than the personal, almost mystical devotion of Paulinus to St Felix. He was most anxious that the saint's miracles should receive the greatest possible publicity. He recorded them in writing, reported them in his sermons, and sharply rebuked a lady from Carthage who had been cured of a cancer by St Stephen but had kept the fact to herself. Like the miracles of Christ himself, the news of them was spread about "to work faith in men ... and induce the people to believe".

It is worth comparing this overt use of the cult of saints as an instrument of proselytization, with the rather similar techniques used two centuries later by the mission which Pope Gregory the Great sent to convert England, for, thanks to the survival of Gregory's letters and the work of Bede, this is probably the best documented Christian mission before the sixteenth century. Gregory, who was also on record (in his commentaries on St John) as saying that the age of miracles had passed, dispatched relics from Rome for use in the new churches built by his missionaries, and was most urgent in his advice that they should convert men by their miracles. "Rejoice!", the pope wrote on hearing that King Ethelbert of Kent had been converted by the occurrence of daily miracles at his court: "the souls of the English have

been drawn by outward miracles to a state of inward grace."

A similar letter might have been written about the mission of St Boniface in Germany or the conversions worked by the relics of St Martin of Tours during the slow Christianization of Merovingian Gaul. Gregory of Tours, the shrine's greatest publicist, found it "impossible to pass over in silence the fate of those pagans and heretics who doubt the miracles which God has wrought on earth to reinforce the faith of his people". They were struck down by the saint for their obstinacy.

It is fair to describe this as "descending to the market place", even if the descent is recorded in Latin as elevated as that of Augustine of Hippo or Gregory the Great. The interesting question is whether the leaders of the Church can fairly be accused of the cynical manipulation of popular enthusiasm. Undoubtedly they can in some cases. Perhaps the most celebrated example is the august fraud perpetrated by St Ambrose in Milan in 386 in "discovering" beneath the floor of his church, at a particularly opportune moment in the struggle against the Arian heresy, the bodies of two unknown "saints" Gervasius and Protasius, a discovery which was followed by a powerful outbreak of popular religious enthusiasm not only in Milan. But what is remarkable about the descent into the market place was that in general it was not cynical. One cannot read early collections of the miracles of the saints without being struck by the patient sincerity of their authors in describing incidents which in some cases they claimed to have witnessed, whereas in reality it was quite simple. What was infinitely subtle and complicated was not the cult itself but the process by which such superior spirits as Augustine of Hippo strained to incorporate it into their scheme of thinking without doing violence to their beliefs. The attempt was not wholly successful.

world; the ease with which enthusiasm is communicated by crowds; these are phenomena which our own age is ill-equipped to understand. The Church in late classical times and throughout the Middle Ages was more than a disseminator of doctrine. As an institution it was part of the social life of the Christian community and had to share that community's values. But it lacked the educational resources to instill other values in simple men than those which they had always held and their fathers before them. It could not impose from above the same degree of cultural homogeneity as schools and television have done in modern times. It took its values from the generosity of its members, who were zealous and illiterate, in short, "vulgar".

Professor Brown almost recognizes this when he emphasizes how important the cult of the saints was in the social functions of the Church, how far small communities were bound together by their common veneration of the local patron saints. But he fails to draw what would seem to be the obvious conclusion, that if Christianity had not become a popular religion and the Church a social institution, the cult of the saints would have had as restricted a place in its maturity as it had done in its earliest years.

Professor Brown's work is ingenious and stimulating, his arguments complicated and illustrated in characteristic style by the breathless citation of disparate examples. But it is based on the premise that popular religion in late antiquity was infinitely subtle and complicated, whereas in reality it was quite simple. What was infinitely subtle and complicated was not the cult itself but the process by which such superior spirits as Augustine of Hippo strained to incorporate it into their scheme of thinking without doing violence to their beliefs. The attempt was not wholly successful.

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commentary

Cricket and crab-apples

By Kate Flint

The Brotherhood of Ruralists
Arncliffe Gallery, Bristol

The deliberate Englishness of the Brotherhood of Ruralists, coupled with their personal adoption of country habits and subjects, leaves them wide open to accusations of reactionary retreat into an idealized past. "Simply our aims are the continuation of a certain kind of English painting; we admire Samuel Palmer, Stanley Spencer, Thomas Hardy, Elgar, cricket, the English landscape, the Pre-Raphaelites," explained Peter Blake in 1977. An enlarged pantheon of heroes is well to the fore in the full-scale exhibition of the Brotherhood's work showing at the Arncliffe Gallery, Bristol until May 16. The artists — Blake, Ann and Graham Arnold, Jann Haworth, David Inshaw and Annie and Graham Ovenden — sometimes borrow compositional elements almost wholesale from their predecessors: Graham Ovenden's "The Evening Cornfield", although transmitting the dull gold of Palmer's corn into a deep fiery orange, includes a bright cloud of unmistakable origins; the branches in his "Communion of the Trees" and "Autumn Apple Tree" seem to have grown Palmer's magical fruits.

Elsewhere are works of direct homage, both to individuals and to those arts of the countryside which, in Hardy's phrase, are "crowded with prints of perished hands": Graham Arnold's detailed pencil drawing of tangled foliage in John Clare's "Woods at Helston" and his "Remembrance for Edward Thomas"; his series of *Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses* to Ruskin, Jefferies and T.S. Eliot. Here, as with other works, Arnold combines painting with collaged photographs, snips from music scores and delicately boxed miniature of the English countryside: pebbles, ears of corn and tufts of moss, they are paralleled by the hawk's wing in Inshaw's enormous montage, "Self Portrait of a Lost Dream", and the bundle of driftwood and labelled pot of crab-apple jelly in Arnold's own "Summer of Solitude". So unambiguous a gesture is this last object that one is tempted to regard it, like the pencilled cricket scores accompanying Hardy and Keats quotations in the margins of Inshaw's working studies, as a near parody. Such elaborate collage and montage, widely used practices by the group which help redeem them from charges of technical archaism; bear little resemblance to the members' earlier exercises in the medium — such as Blake's sleeve for *Sergeant Pepper*. Only a glimpse in Inshaw's "Homage to Virginia Woolf", with its photographic portrait, twenty-four lip prints, and ten dead daffodil heads, do traces of postmodernism linger. But surrealism of a different kind is strongly present in Inshaw's impressive, metaphysical "Badminton Game"; "Premonition" and "River Bank: Ophelia", where ambiguously occupied female figures are dwarfed by huge topiary bushes and felled trees.

Like the Pre-Raphaelites, the Ruralists are not afraid of violent colour: rich, mossy, viridian greens predominate in many of the paintings. Like those Victorian predecessors, too, these painters make much use of hard line and of meticulously painted, photographically minute details which stress, in Ruskinian fashion, the variety and proliferation they find in nature. Since coming together in 1975 they, like the earlier Brotherhood, have executed a number of joint projects. Already completed are works by all the group on the theme of Ophelia, from Blake's gaunt, unhappy figure, with wet, tattered, lily-tinted hair, to water-wreathed, to Graham Arnold's sulky little girl, surrounded on the river bank by such renders of Hamlet's affection as butterfly collection, a patchwork cushion, a feather bookmark — as are particularly suited to Ruralist treatment. Current common ground includes the



David Inshaw: "Lovers near Kew Gardens" (1976), from the exhibition reviewed here

preparation of original illustrations for covers of a new edition of the Arden Shakespeare plays, and the production, by each artist, of a work entitled "The Definitive Nude".

But despite one's admiration for their technical virtuosity, their patience and dedication; the exhibition retains a curiously provincial air. No doubt this would not be despised by the practitioners: their works certainly convey the intended sense of quintessential Englishness. They incorporate, too, many personal interjections in the form of family likenesses, snapshots,

visual autobiographical fragments: direct manifestos of the importance of both past and present to individuals. These give meaning to Graham Arnold's contention that they are not nostalgic, copying the past, but that they attempt to give "very much the spirit of being alive at this particular moment". This, surely, can only be true at a personal level. Where such testimony is present, the works are often moving. When it is absent, nostalgia, even whimsy, quickly creeps in, bringing the Brotherhood's ambitious enterprise dangerously close to an act of defeatism.

Photographs in focus

By Mark Haworth-Booth

The Royal Photographic Society's new National Centre of Photography in Bath was opened by Princess Margaret on April 15. The RPS now has 11,000 square feet at its disposal, centred on The Octagon in Milson Street, a graceful structure built as a proprietary chapel in 1764-7. The ground floor is now the Centre's principal exhibition hall, while the gallery above houses a permanent display of the history of photography from its origins to the early twentieth century. In addition, there are a well-stocked bookshop, the Link Gallery, intended for temporary exhibitions, and the Long Gallery, in which there will be changing displays drawn from the Society's important collection of some 20,000 prints. Considerable costs approach £500,000, the bulk of which came from industrial and private sponsors. The result is an elegant and spacious new space for photography which should make a significant national contribution.

The main exhibition space is currently devoted to a retrospective exhibition of 147 photographs by Bill Brandt. It is the most comprehensive Brandt exhibition yet mounted. Four huge enlargements from his series of nudes dominate the central space beneath the lantern. The prints shown include delicate full-toned examples printed forty years ago, high-contrast ones in Brandt's more familiar style and prints made from negatives in their possession by the Hulton Picture Library and the Imperial War Museum. Some of the most striking pictures (like the extraordinary view of the Seven Sisters on the Sussex Coast, 1957), have never been exhibited or published before, or have remained unseen since 1940, when Brandt last exhibited his "Spanish Bazaar" of 1932. These should surely find a place in future editions of Brandt's book *Shadow of Light* (1977).

The exhibition was organized by the Curator of Photographs at the RPS, Valerie Lloyd, and David Mellor, who

contributes an excellent introduction to the catalogue (48 pp., 29 plates, 24 text illustrations). Cameron and Tayleur, £4.95, 0 906506 00 X). The text is not only the fullest discussion of Brandt so far published but among the very few detailed stylistic contributions available on any twentieth-century master: there is still next to nothing, for example, on Cartier-Bresson. Mellor is especially good on the original publication-contexts of Brandt's photographs — whether in the early books, *Lilliput* and *Harper's Bazaar*, or on special commissions like the wartime Shelter photographs taken for the Ministry of Information. Mellor's research has also led him to compare Brandt's work with films such as Bunuel's *Los Hurdes* of 1932 for which he coined the term, "Surrealist Realism". He offers a commentary on the relationship of Brandt's use of the camera with Surrealist theory, and draws attention to a childhood illustrated book by which Brandt is still fascinated, tracing the structure of *The English at Home* (1936) to a picture book called *Cherry Stones*, illustrated by Charles Crombie with verses by Alice M. Walker, published about 1910. A comparison of the photographs with the illustrations is surprisingly convincing, although Mellor is on surer ground when he compares a Tennill illustration to "Alice in Wonderland" with "Young Girl, Edith Place", 1935. The reversal of scale in Lewis Carroll are an apt prefiguration of Brandt's nudes.

The Long Gallery has one exhibition on the family tree of the Leica camera, from the Ur-Leica of 1913 to the 1978 model, and a second, appropriately devoted to Sir John Horsey, whose father (the Astronomer Royal) was organist in the Octagon Chapel in 1766. This little exhibition contains many priceless and sometimes very beautiful hitherto unpublished photographs described and catalogued by Larry Schif in a useful twenty-page publication at £3.00.

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Film blond

By Hugo Williams

Union City
Screen on the Green

There is nothing shaking in the dingy side-street when the cab draws up at the run-down apartment block and a drunk gets out accompanied by a blonde. But the cab's arrival has attracted the attention of the local vagrant who, hoping for a nibble of the driver's tip, moves out of the shadows to spin his usual hard-luck story. The driver isn't buying it. He hands the vagrant the drunk's old fedora. "Maybe you can sell it back to him," he cracks as he pulls away from the curb.

As if we need it, here is the film's first nude in the ribs to remind us of 1950s B-feature land. The street is that street, the drunk is that drunk and the young vagrant is the next generation inheriting the form's most distinctive prop. He is played by Sam McMurray, a rangy young man oddly reminiscent of another McMurray, whose mug is synonymous with vintage 1950s treachery. He tries on the old hat and (surprise!) it fits like a glove. He pulls it down over his eyes and smiles to himself. He is all set to take on the title-role in a film of *The Corpse Next Door*, the story by Cornell Woolrich (who also provided Truffaut with *The Bride Wore Black*) from which *Union City* is taken.

It was the Cahiers du Cinéma critics of the Nouvelle Vague, like Truffaut, who dignified this Hollywood sub-genre with the name *film noir*; the same critics who gave Jerry Lewis and Sam Fuller a second-degree respectability. The phrase was intended to lend significance to certain sleazy post-war movies that took place mostly in downtown Los Angeles after dark and whose staple ingredients were cold blood and missing neon, the flip-side of "Happy Days". Such films were thought to reflect the atmosphere of double-cross and paranoia which pervaded the McCarthy era. They were probably more influenced by conflation than social conscience, but any one who has tried to take notes in one of these *film noir* describes them well. The present film takes its visual style from the species, and actors like Alan Ladd, Farley Granger or Jack Palance would fit snugly enough into its jagged red and black diagonals.

Meanwhile, upstairs in the apartment, the weak-featured Harlan (Dennis Lipscomb) is nagging his sexually-frustrated wife over the purchase of a pair of red shoes. "I think they're cute," says Lillian, flirting with her re-art-deco dressing table mirror.

Post-natal

By Robert Hewison

Baby Talk
BBC TV

Nigel Williams's *Baby Talk* makes you feel horrid to be alive. This sad story of baby battering among the bourgeoisie begins with a clipped, passionless conversation between Mary and Paul on the concept of parenthood. Throughout the play, Pinter-esque stylizations of the "Are you OK?" — "No, I'm fine" — are used to threaten to exclude emotion, until you realize that this is just what the couple are trying to do.

Mary and Paul are young, upwardly mobile communicators who cannot talk to each other. (Their only effective conversation is on the telephone.) A terrifying move into a working-class area, and the decision to have a baby, place them, for the first time, in a world of real emotion. Next door, Tess, of course, is warm, natural and working-class (towards the baby, but Mary herself feels nothing but cold fear and loathing for her child, expressed as guilt). Since Mary automatically returns to her job on a woman's magazine, the solution is to co-opt Tess, but Mary in her post-

Her frustration, though marginal to the plot, provides Debbie Harry with a perfect opportunity to stick orange glaucoma blooms in her black underwear and to run hungry fingers over her tummy (a sequence which the French would say expressed the latent restlessness of consumer society). But Harlan's anal-erotic fixation (small business?) has focused on the recurrent theft of milk from outside the apartment door. Lit like a murderer, he devises a naïve plan to catch the thief: a decoy bottle and sits in bed all night with the gut wound round his index finger, an inspired idea of American manhood. As he explains to his secretary, with the aid of a map and more cat-gut, "One good jerk on this and I got that jerk". "It sounds like a detective story," replies the woman after a long pause. "Evelyn, I think you're beginning to get the right idea," says Harlan, exhibiting a sickly joy for once.

Next night, the jerk is jerked and his blood ends up in the milk. "I've seen you," says the vagrant in the fog (for it is he). "You never take your milk out, you..." It is like a voice from the future accusing the fabulous films of male chauvinism. But what to do with the body? For someone like Harlan, spiritual heir to Peter Lorre in Fritz Lang's *M*, the first thing to do is panic: the next is to lay a trail of clues straight to your own door. "I'm converting to Catholicism," he blubbers to his indifferent bride. "I'm converting to a blonde," replies Lillian, getting ready to quill the 1950s to become Debbie Harry of Blondie.

The song-writer Tom Wailes, whose 1950s stake-out lies adjacent to *Union City*, claims to have been asleep throughout the 1960s. By lying low he came into his power. What we like about his music (and this film) is the fresh slant it has on part of our own past. When I first saw Lillian, I thought she was soft in the head. Then I realized how artfully Miss Harry was summoning that halcyon age when women were little more than figments of men's egos, servile and vicious, the poet their ultimate sedition. "You talk like you picked me up off the streets," she says, sulkily snarling at her legs, as Harlan vents his self-loathing on her once again. Dennis Lipscomb, even the name makes you shudder, looks so like the slack-jawed psycho of a thousand teen comic-books that it came at a shock to see that he had calmly taken tea and macaroons in the lobby of the Rank Preview Theatre after the press showing. I recalled instinctively from shaking his clammy hand and hurried my daughter in Blondie (fan) outside.

natal depression becomes jealous, she tries the middle-class expedient of a pair, and then the upper-middle-class expedient of a chilly professional nanny, but nothing works. Mary disintegrates to the point of the baby's near-destruction.

Susan Liffel is unsympathetic yet moving as the quivering, smoking, by-then, unmaternal mother, John Harding as off-hand as a journalist on the *Good* *Evening* might be when confronted by the "Are you OK?" — "No, I'm fine" — are used to threaten to exclude emotion, until you realize that this is just what the couple are trying to do.

The only weakness in Nigel Williams's engagingly well-observed play is the need to invent a Jewish mother for Mary herself, who refuses her daughter the experience of love and emotion that Mary now craves. This express to her own child. This explains Mary's agony, but less than the play's depiction of the conflict of career and parenthood. The book, directed by Derek Lister in an episodic manner, *Baby Talk* was produced by Antie Hand.

Mariana at the syncopeated grange

By Stephen Wall

Measure for Measure
Lyttelton Theatre

Measure for Measure is generally felt to be a problem. Criticism dignifies its difficulties by making it the principal exhibit in a pseudo-genre — the so-called problem plays. The problem becomes, in the most convenient way, the point. The more convenient way, the more the manoeuvre is more face-saving than therapeutic, the critic reclassifies a heart attack as a cardiac event. In the theatre, though, problems have to be, if not solved, at least resolved, and the temptation to deal with this play's ambiguities and imbalances by some bold interpretation of the stroke is strong. It is a temptation which Michael Rudman's new production at the National Theatre makes no attempt to resist. He has transported the play well beyond the still-revered Bernoulli to some mythical Caribbean island, "a mixture of Haiti and Trinidad". References to Vienna are carefully suppressed.

The most obvious and certainly very welcome benefit of this device is that it allows him to use a largely West Indian cast. Black actors do not get the opportunities on the English stage that the talents of the best of them deserve — the legitimate theatre is still a long way from the integrated casting now normal in opera — and there are strong performances here from unfamiliar names. Even so, it is the general style of the production that begs the question.

We don't need to go to the Caribbean to know that in sexual matters the area between private freedom and public interest is more than usually grey, but the new setting at least ensures a sense of social context. Wherever possible, the director has opened out the scenes so that they not only relate to but take place in the presence of what Claudio calls the body politic. At the beginning, the Duke's hand-over meeting with Escalus and Angelo occurs in an ambience of warm republic-*grand luxe*, with off-stage calls of "Pardons vos jeux" and on-stage tinklings from the wireless, so that at this point it is not easy to follow the knotty syntax in which the Duke explains his reasons for taking a sabbatical. The marketplace set — three balconies, lots of stairs, elaborate roofscape — is filled with tarts, cripples, souvenir-salesmen, small spolar citizens and picturesque hawk-vendors. The intended impression of the common life of, say, Cayman's Cuba in fact comes perilously near to reminding us of the conga musicals of yesterday — an impression disastrously briefly confirmed when Lucio (Peter Straker) launches into an extraneous and Angelo number, "Let's be Marlene Overdone, played by Bertie Reading, turns up at Mariana's moated grange to sing "Take, O take those lips away, at a cocktail piano; later still, Pompey makes a calypso of his catalogue of the prison population, but this speech is admittedly often done to some sort of tune).

All the same, our instinctive sense of the arbitrary exercise of power in such times gives an unusual degree of credibility to Angelo's exploitation of it. In a world where dark-glassed motorcyclists really do turn up in the small hours, it's quite easy to believe that what seemed a question of private morality should suddenly become a matter of life and death. Thus the capital sentence passed on Claudio merely by "unlawful" (as Lucio puts it) "appears both plausible and frightening. As a result, the violent reaction to it of his little sister, the pregnant intended, and the Duke's ambivalence, more powerfully affecting, and more powerfully exposed, than it has often been.

In particular, benefits from the play's liberation from the usual constraints of the genre. The Duke, looking after the family while his wife is in the hospital, his experience as a soldier in the First World War (when he discovered he could

strous ransom" with a power that comes naturally in a world beyond English inhibition. Her spiritual principles seem a natural concomitant of her physical energy, and they don't cut her off from natural affections — her relationship with Claudio (sympathetically played by Troy Foster) is movingly explored and exceptionally convincing. It is not really a surprise, therefore, that when the returned Duke proposes to her at the end of Act 5 — always an awkward moment to interpret, since Shakespeare gives Isabella nothing to say — she should appear to take quite happily to the idea. We are a long way from the solution adopted by John Barton's Stratford production, in which an appalled Estelle Kohler was left alone on stage gazing into the new pit suddenly opening at her feet. But it may well be that Michael Rudman's reading is closer to the original.

The lithe physicality of this Isabella

makes Angelo's attraction to her the more understandable (although it rather disables his complaint about black masks proclaiming an onshick beauty ten times louder than beauty could, displayed). But for all his intelligence and at times his power, Norman Seaton's Angelo does not seem sufficiently shaken by his unforeseen spasm of lust. His pedagogic insistence of manner suggests well enough a kind of intellectual aggression that could easily lapse into cruelty, but although the two great scenes with Isabella in Act 2 exert their usual power, the sexual situation remains tepid.

As for the motivation of the Duke, it remains opaque — a problem which Stefan Kalipha's performance, for all its charm, does not really clarify. His manner during his low-life researches is so sweetly charitable as to be almost winsome. His disguise as a friar is shown to be not without danger: the

crowd's behaviour to him during Lucio's taunts is distinctly menacing, so that when Lucio finally pulls off the Duke's disguise, his interpolated "Jesus Christ!" crudely underlines a level of suggestion that was already as obvious as it needed to be. The use of the balcony level for the Duke on his return gives him an impressive judgment that is somewhat offset by his general amiability. Perhaps that is just part of his mastery of plaza politics — he uses a discreet public address system not only for his judicial clearing-up but also for his proposal to Isabella. The director's acknowledged prejudice in favour of public behaviour in Shakespeare could hardly be more clearly demonstrated. Even if this bold strategy does not adequately align the play's discontinuities, it makes an interesting change from the more usual modern impulse to hand *Measure for Measure* over to the private sector.

Time warp

By Stanley Wells

The Knight of the Burning Pestle
Aldwych Theatre

Francis Beaumont creates a sophisticated interplay between the London grocer George, his wife Nell, and the play, *The London Merchant*, which they watch, comment on and interrupt, and into which they encourage their son Ralph and his mates to interpolate episodes. The citizens' comments on the Jacobean theatrical scene date badly today; and Michael Bogdanov, who directs the revival by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Aldwych Theatre, finds entertaining and surprisingly precise modern equivalents for the objects of Beaumont's satire. The opening scene, in which George and Nell first interrupt the Prologue from their seats in the stalls, then clamour on to the stage and reorganize the evening's entertainment to suit their own inclinations, achieves a shock effect (reminiscent of Bogdanov's *Shrew*) such as it may have had at the play's first performance. (On the opening night of this production a member of the audience tried to shout down the audience's comments on theatre goers' comments, on theatre goers' comments, on theatre goers' comments.) The intended impression of the common life of, say, Cayman's Cuba in fact comes perilously near to reminding us of the conga musicals of yesterday — an impression disastrously briefly confirmed when Lucio (Peter Straker) launches into an extraneous and Angelo number, "Let's be Marlene Overdone, played by Bertie Reading, turns up at Mariana's moated grange to sing "Take, O take those lips away, at a cocktail piano; later still, Pompey makes a calypso of his catalogue of the prison population, but this speech is admittedly often done to some sort of tune).

All the same, our instinctive sense of the arbitrary exercise of power in such times gives an unusual degree of credibility to Angelo's exploitation of it. In a world where dark-glassed motorcyclists really do turn up in the small hours, it's quite easy to believe that what seemed a question of private morality should suddenly become a matter of life and death. Thus the capital sentence passed on Claudio merely by "unlawful" (as Lucio puts it) "appears both plausible and frightening. As a result, the violent reaction to it of his little sister, the pregnant intended, and the Duke's ambivalence, more powerfully affecting, and more powerfully exposed, than it has often been.

Lost innocence

By Paul Bailey

Here's a Funny Thing
Lyric Theatre-Hammersmith

John Bardon's one-man show, put together with the aid of R. J. Shakespeare, attempts to convey something of the life and art of Max Miller, the great music-hall comedian who died in 1963.

In the first half, we see Bardon's Max in rehearsal. He is trying out his songs with a new pianist — the energetic Zena Cooper, whose muscular interpretations of such masterpieces as "The Girls Who Do" and "Mary from the Dairies" reminded me of the Titanic support that Madame Blanche Mores supported to offer Frankie Howard. Besides to offer Frankie Howard, Bardon's Max is reminiscent of a clown between a tribe and a stepten. He contrives somehow to make this outfit appear slightly sinister, mainly because he lacks the joyful panache of the time he is otherwise impersonating. So

that people laugh), and about his long training in the seedy provincial theatres of the 1920s and 30s. He mentions his "vicious" relationship with tight-fisted impresarios from Fred Karno to Val Parnell, who banned him from the London Palladium; after he had gone over his allotted five minutes at a Royal Command Performance. He tells, too, of being outwitted by the BBC for recounting the famous joke that has him, improbably, on a narrow mountain pass, where he is faced with a difficult dilemma: in the shape of a buxom, half-naked girl who is coming in the other direction: "I didn't know whether to toss myself off, or to block her passage."

The second part of *Here's a Funny Thing* consists of an entire Max Miller set, at the Palladium in the mid-1950s. John Bardon sports a floral-patterned overcoat, flamboyant plus-fours, golf shoes, and a hat that looks like a cross between a trilby and a stetson. He contrives somehow to make this outfit appear slightly sinister, mainly because he lacks the joyful panache of the time he is otherwise impersonating. So

cleverly. As he came on to the stage, I thought immediately of Oliver's Archie Rice, and remembered that Oliver had made a close study of Miller's art when he was working on his interpretation. Archie's fatness was sinister, too, whereas Max Miller's was always on ironic display. The comic I saw so often in my youth (at the Metropolitan, Edgware Road, that loveless of Victorian theatres, and at the Flansbury Park Empire, where he occasionally appeared in drag as an unlikely tart called Pearl) was free from any such taint: his grin was wide and generous, not desperate, and his knowledge of sexual matters was beautifully balanced by an assumption of innocence that was never intended to be credible. Bardon, who deals with the individual jokes well enough, cannot sustain that subtle balance.

It may seem odd to talk of subtlety, but that is exactly what Max Miller brought to an act that could easily have degenerated into mere grubbiest. He possessed a curious delicacy, even as he leered, in his ingenuitous time, he was a liberating spirit.

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Oxford University Press

commentary

Intellectuals' influence

By Galen Strawson

"La France est un pays de tradition. Il lui faut des maîtres à penser. Elle aime la révérence, le génuflexion et que les écrivains lui dictent ses réveries." Thus Gilles Lapouge, commenting on a "referendum", half serious, half in joke, conducted by the monthly literary journal *L'Esprit*. I asked the following question of 600 writers, teachers, journalists, students, and politicians: "Among living French-speaking intellectuals, which three, in your opinion, have by their writings exercised the greatest influence, in depth ('en profondeur'), on the evolution of ideas, letters, the arts, the science, etc?"

Three-quarters of the 600 replied; but nearly ten per cent did so only in order to say that they could not answer the question. It is perhaps not easy to interpret. It is not clear that one is simply being asked to make a factual judgment about who has had the greatest influence, rather than a value-judgment about who one thinks ought to have had. Or rather, it is clear that the purely factual answer is required, but it is equally clear that many of those

who replied did not so take the question.

At the beginning of last year, Sartre might still have headed such a poll; Barthes, too, might have found a place in the top ten. But both died last year; and in the event it is Lévi-Strauss who emerges clear winner, with 101 votes, twenty-four per cent of the total. Raymond Aron and Michel Foucault lie second and third, with eighty-four and eighty-three votes respectively. Thereafter the votes drop away rapidly. Jacques Lacan comes fourth, with fifty-one votes, Simone de Beauvoir fifth with forty-six, Marguerite Yourcenar sixth with thirty-two. Fernand Braudel is seventh with twenty-seven votes, Michel Tournier (who, characteristically, votes for himself) eighth with twenty-four, while Bernard-Henri Lévy (the "nouveau philosophe") and Henri Michaux (the poet) rank equal ninth with twenty-two. François Jacob, the biologist, tied with Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Ionesco is eighteenth, while Albert Camus and Claude Lévi-Strauss (the cartoonist) and with René Char, the poet, and Gilles Deleuze, the philosopher) in twenty-sixth place.

Author, author

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than Friday, May 22. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers to be opened, or failing that the most nearly correct – in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries should be addressed to the Editor, The Times Literary Supplement, PO Box 7, New Printing House Square, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8EZ, and marked "Author, Author" on the envelope. The solution and result will appear in our issue of May 29.

Competition No. 54

- 1 Shall gentle — pass unnoticed here, To turgid ode and tumid stanza dear? Though themes of innocence amuse him best, Yet still Obscurity's a welcome guest.

- 2 A puffy, anxious, obstructed-looking, fatish old man, hobbled about with a kind of solemn emphasis on matters which were of no interest (and even reading pieces in proof of his opinions thereon).

- 3 — came in with a sack full of books, etc. and a branch of Mountain ash. He had been attacked by a cow.

Result of Competition No 53

Winner: Richard Hamilton, Woodridge, Ancrum Road, Dalketh, Midlothian.

Answers:

- 1 James Ramsay, sitting on the floor cutting out pictures from the illustrated catalogue of the Army and Navy Stores, endowed the picture of a refrigerator as his mother spoke with heavenly bliss. It was fringed with joy.

Doubtless Lévi-Strauss owes his victory to his influence as the earliest major exponent in France (outside mathematics) of that ill-defined discipline, Structuralism, whose practitioners appear to have only one thing in common – the tendency to deny that they are structuralists. Be that as it may, his victory is characteristic of the rest of the poll in two respects. First, academics are paramount – taking five of the first ten places – where once novelists and poets might have been expected to hold sway. Second, there is a marked lack of consensus. Lévi-Strauss, although the winner, only gets twenty-four per cent of the votes; such is the diversity of opinion, indeed, that only five individuals get even ten per cent; "il n'y a plus d'influence en profondeur".

Lack of consensus is the principal theme of those who replied only to say that they could not reply. It is welcomed by a few, regretted by many. None is as bitter as Jean Chalou, who nominates "un intellectuel, le Vide, et deux intellectuelles, la Vanité et la Publicité." But perhaps the most interesting thing about the referendum, in the end, is that the French are able to carry it out at all. It is very hard to imagine an English version.

Poets' protest

By Carol Rumens

Poets Against the Bomb
Old Town Hall, Chelsea (April 15)

In the Old Town Hall, Chelsea, black banners draped the platform. An eager crowd of spectators had soon accumulated, a little over-awed, perhaps, by the opulent chandeliers, the incident-laden murals and pillars of hectic marble. Soon a smaller but equally motley crowd shuffled onto the platform with the modest air we have come to expect from our more image-conscious politicians. The film crew dived and signalled each other, with the élan of licensed hi-jackers. But when the speeches began – mercifully short and often containing rhymes and jokes – it soon became clear that this was not so much a political rally as a poetry reading.

A poetry reading, what's more, that seemed to inherit something of the spirit of that historic happening at the Albert Hall in 1965. This was no Poetry International, but with four poets performing gathered to raise funds for the CND, it certainly scored over its predecessor as to length. Derek Mahin and Eddie Linden, Ruth Fainlight and Brian Patten and Harold Pinter were there, the children of Albion and the older statesmen of the poetic establishment did not flinch from each other's company.

Among this week's contributors

PAUL BAILEY's most recent novel *Old Soldiers* was published last year.

JOHN BAYLEY's books include *The Uses of Division: Unity and Disharmony in Literature*, 1976. His *Shakespeare and Tragedy* will be reviewed shortly in the TLS.

HAROLD BEAVER is Reader in American Literature at the University of Warwick.

RICHARD BONNEY is the author of *Political Change in France under Richelieu and Mazarin 1624-1661*, 1978.

CHRISTOPHER BOOKER's most recent book, *The Games War: A Moscow Journal*, was published earlier this year.

ANTHONY BURGESS's *Mr W.S. – A Baller* was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 in 1979, and his opera *The Blooms of Dublin* will be broadcast next year.

PETER CLARKE is the author of *Liberals and Social Democrats*, 1978.

GAY CLIFFORD is a lecturer in English at University College London.

IRENE COLLINS is a Reader in Modern History at the University of Liverpool.

DAVID CONSTANTINE's collection of poems *A Brightness to Cast Shadows* was published earlier this year.

JOHN CRUICKSHANK's *Variations on Catastrophe: Some French Responses to the Great War* will be published later this year.

J. B. DORRIS is the translator of Gauguin's *Noa Noa*, 1980.

KATE FLINT is a lecturer in English at the University of Bristol.

MARK HAWORTH-BOWY is Assistant Keeper of Photographs at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE's most recent book is *The New Inquisition: Schillebeeckx and Käse*, 1980.

ROBERT HENSON's *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War 1945-1980* was published last month.

THOMAS HOBBKIN's *Nigerian Perspectives* was published in a second edition in 1979.

MICHAEL HOLROYD's books include *Lytton Strachey: A Critical Biography*, 1967-68, and *Augustus John*, 1974-75. He is at present working on a

There were "surprise" visits from Pete Brown, Adrian Mitchell and the excellent Roy Fisher. A member of the audience told me she had had touch with what was happening in the poetry world and had therefore come to get a concentrated dose of it; it must have taken away a coolish, slightly dated, but not unenjoying impression.

Bold attempts at grappling with the nuclear horror head-on were made by some of the poets: Judith Kazantzis, for example, who sees the bomb as the ultimate phallus – the "penicillin"; Adrian Mitchell "Upon the beach at Cambridge" viewing a less familiar scene of cladders and black waves. It is enormously hard to imagine and write about the holocaust without making it seem homely and almost bearable. It may be that to observe and explore the more immediate material of our lives is the best way for literature to use the values of which the bomb is the negation. Gavin Ewart's delightful celebration of his daughter's sixteenth birthday is one example of the more poems that, though dealing with more personal feelings and observations, took on a new resonance from being read in such a context. The same was true of Donne's "A Nocturnal Upon St. Lucy's Day", finely spoken by Harold Pinter. As well as being a lament for one woman, it now seemed also a lament for humanity. "Since this/Both the year's and the day's deep midnight is".

biography of Bernard Shaw.

EUROPE KAMENKA's books include *Ethical Foundations of Marxism*, 1981, and *The Philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach*, 1970. He has recently edited a series of books for Edward Arnold on the crisis of law and legal ideology.

ABRAHAM KELIDAR is a lecturer in Politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

ANNETTE LAYERS's *Structuralism and Post-Structuralism* will be published later this year.

CHARLES MADGE was Professor of Sociology at the University of Birmingham from 1950 to 1970.

LUCY MAIR's books include *Witchcraft*, 1969.

DENIS MATTHEWS's books include *Beethoven Piano Sonatas*, 1967.

JOHN MOLE's new collection of poems, *Feeding the Lake*, will be published by Secker and Warburg later this year.

KENNETH O. MORGAN's *Wales 1880-1980* was published last month.

PAUL MULDOON's most recent collection of poems, *Why Brownlee Left*, was published in 1980.

GEORGE RUDOLPH is Professor of History at Concordia University, Montreal. His recent books include *Robertson*, 1975, and *Ideology and Popular Protest*, 1980.

ANDREW SANDERS's *The Victorian Historical Novel* was published in 1979.

PETER SCUPHAM's most recent collection of poems is *Summer Palaces*, 1980.

MERLO TRAVOR's books include *Prophecy and Guardians: Ritual and Tradition in the Church*, 1959.

B. S. TURNER's most recent book is *Dear Old Blighly*, 1980.

STEPHEN WALL is a Fellow of Keble College, Oxford, and editor of *Essays in Criticism*.

STANLEY WELLS's books include *Royal Shakespearean: Studies of Poetic Major Productions at Stratford-upon-Avon*, 1977.

HUGO WILLIAMS's most recent collection of poems, *Love Life* was published last year.

Cancer and Vitamin C

Sir. – M. A. Epstein (April 3) to the contrary, Linus Pauling is not consumed by an "almost obsessive preoccupation with vitamin C". For one thing Dr Pauling writes extensively on other nutrients, such as vitamins B3 and B6, on a variety of measures to improve both mental and physical health, and on the biochemical rationale for such nutrients and measures. His work on vitamin C is but a portion of these writings. In addition, Dr Pauling devotes the bulk of his research efforts, as he has for the past 25 years, to fundamental questions in physics, chemistry, crystallography and medicine.

It is completely unfair, because it is inaccurate, to state that "Dr Pauling has a mystical faith in vitamin C quite unrelated to any serious body of scientific investigation". Dr Pauling became interested in vitamin C when presented with a large body of scientific evidence gathered by the biochemist Irwin Stone, and he first wrote on the vitamin in *Vitamin C and the Common Cold* (1968), because through extensive search of the medical literature and close analysis of the original papers he had found a dozen valid double-blind trials confirming the vitamin's effectiveness against the common cold.

With regard to cancer, associates of the Pauling Institute have tested the vitamin on over 2,000 human subjects, and this is part of a growing body of solid epidemiological and clinical evidence of the vitamin's therapeutic value against that disease. I may add that the literature on vitamin C is at present growing by three papers per day, which scarcely suggests a lack of interest or levity to the work" – or rather the grant committee which customarily grants the available research funds to itself – has seen something new in an application which has remained virtually unchanged for eight years, "inconceivable" as this may be to M. A. Epstein.

Finally, Professor Epstein finds it surprising that the Pauling Institute's research on cancer "should have been totally discounted by almost every expert in the field". I find it surprising that he does not know that thirty Nobel Laureates, including thirteen winners of the Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine, have demonstrated their confidence in the Linus Pauling Institute's aims and methods by joining the Board of Associates of the Institute.

RANDOLPH BUFANO.
Editor in Chief, Linus Pauling Institute Newsletter, Linus Pauling Institute of Science and Medicine, 440 Page Mill Road, Palo Alto, California 94306.

Bestsellers in the 1930s

Sir. – In her review of John Sutcliffe's *Bestsellers* (April 17), Victoria Glendinning states that there were no bestseller lists in Britain until 1970. In fact such lists were published in *The Observer* during the greater part of the 1930s, appearing at the foot of a weekly article by the editor of the book pages, Viola Garvin. Although the source of these lists was not acknowledged, they were compiled by a member of the staff of Bumpus, then perhaps the best bookshop in London, and for several years this was one of my tasks.

No attempt was made to count the number of copies sold, the choice of books for inclusion being purely subjective, but I think that on the whole the lists were fairly made. The only occasion I remember actually cheating was a week or two after Chaitin published William Empson's first volume of verse, a book I much admired at that time. Although I think we sold as much poetry as anyone in London, we had managed to sell only two copies and I thought I would help it along by including it on my list. Miss Garvin noted that it was both surprising and pleasing to see a book of modern verse among the bestsellers, and I remember feeling that perhaps both author and publisher were similarly surprised.

KENNETH SPELMAN.
Scoulton, Norwich NR9 4PE.

Gout

Sir. – My interest in "historical" gout started twenty years ago when W. S. Lewis asked me whether I thought that Horace Walpole's recorded symptoms could have been due to this disease. Pat Rogers (March 20) accepts emphatically that they were, but I did not, and this underlines a main weakness in his article. "The rise and fall of gout" which shows as well misleading and out-of-date medical views, and incorrect biochemistry. Retrospective medical diagnosis is liable to be faulty, and this is particularly likely with gout which is not a common disease. Rheumatoid arthritis occurs ten times as frequently as gout, and is its chief diagnostic rival. Although Thomas Sydenham gave a perfect description of an acute attack of gout in his *Tractatus de Podagra* et *Hydrops* in 1685, accurate diagnosis depends on the finding of crystals of sodium urate in synovial fluid from an affected joint, so that a precise diagnosis was only first made by A. B. Garrod in 1848. I doubt that the Duke of Northumberland's ankle which measured eleven and one-half inches and caused him to appear with two walking sticks, a gout stone and worsted stockings was so enlarged and painful from gout, and I also doubt that Milton died of it. I confess that I was unaware of this well-known inevitable truth, but that upon reviewing the literature I found applications in eighteenth-century National Cancer Institute literature that the Pauling Institute had translated the Pauling Institute's research on the primary form of familial hyperoxaluria in which there is an

overproduction of uric acid, a production which is little influenced by the breakdown of dietary purines. Secondary gout is due to increased production of uric acid in various haematological disorders or to decreased renal excretion of uric acid in kidney disease. Gout occurs in males after puberty and earlier than in females in whom it typically occurs after the menopause, and the incidence of gouty arthritis is six times more common in men than women. It chiefly affects the joints of the lower extremity by the deposition of crystals of sodium urate around them, a deposition that may also occur in the kidneys and lead to kidney disease and uric acid renal stones. The first attacks are acute, and untreated resolve spontaneously within ten to fourteen days, but with recurrent attacks the arthritis may become chronic from the destructive effect of the tissue deposits of urate crystals. Gouty patients and asymptomatic relatives may show raised blood levels of uric acid, but this is not essential in order to diagnose the disease. Acute gout, then, occurs in recurrent attacks at greatly varying intervals of time, and chronic gouty arthritis gives the symptoms of a more non-specific destructive arthritis.

The mistakes in Pat Rogers's article may now be listed. An attack of gout may be precipitated by over-indulgence in food and alcohol, but the "rich" diet of the more articulate and better-documented sufferers does not cause the disease, which will be even common in the poorer classes, even though starvation or a diet low in purines may lower the blood urate levels. Rogers wrote that gout is overwhelmingly a male disorder and that it affects only a minute proportion of women according to his researches. Gouty women have been recorded, such as Queen Anne, but as already mentioned the onset of their disease is likely to be later in life with an incidence six times less than in men, but not minute. The high noon of gout in England around 1750 to 1800 is illusory, though the argument is interesting.

MILTON KEYNES.
3 Brunswick Walk, Cambridge.

György Faludy

Sir. – In his letter (April 10) George Gömöri disputes George Mikes's claim (March 27) that György Faludy is Hungary's greatest living poet. He also implies that Mikes's views are biased in favour of Faludy by "personal reminiscences", and "not based on critical consensus in or outside Hungary". I had the privilege of meeting Faludy only twice in my life and am not biased by personal reminiscences; moreover, as a writer born in Hungary but not a Hungarian writer, I may perhaps claim to have a more detached view than writers involved in *émigré* politics. Yet there is no doubt in my mind that Faludy belongs to the handful of contemporary Hungarian poets of international stature, and that among those handful he is *primus inter pares*.

ARTHUR KOESTLER.
Denston, nr Newmarket, Suffolk.

Sir. – I do not intend to get involved in a lengthy argument with Mr Gömöri (Letters, April 10) about György Faludy's greatness. I called Faludy Hungary's greatest living poet. As he has been persecuted both by the Nazis and the Communists, this claim is new and I did not expect it to go unchallenged. It will be some time before it is generally accepted.

But when Gömöri compares my views with those of Zhdanov he is getting plain silly. I never said, or implied, that the best social system must unfailingly produce the best literature. I did say – and am saying it again – that great literature cannot flourish under tyranny. It may be written (indeed, I said that some of Faludy's best poems had been written in Reck concentration camp) but will not be published. Pasternak and Mandelstam – Gömöri's examples – prove my point. They are not published in the Soviet Union; Faludy is not published in Hungary.

GEORGE MIKES.
18 Dorncliffe Road, London SW6 5LE.

Pierre Petitfils

Sir. – I hasten to satisfy Alistair Allott's laudable desire for information about the author of *Verdaine* (April 10). Monsieur Pierre Petitfils has, for the past thirty years, been recognized as an authority on Rimbaud, especially on the factual aspects of his life and work. He is at present the "Directeur-gérant" of the *Amis de Rimbaud* (13, rue P.-L. Courier, 75007, Paris), and an active contributor to the society's journal *Rimbaud vivant* and *Études rimbaldiennes*.

C. A. HACKETT.
Shawford Close, Shawford, Winchester, Hampshire SO21 2BL.

Scots Law

Sir. – At 1981 is the centenary of the publication of Viscount Stair's *Institutions of the Law of Scotland*, which is particularly called upon to comment on a remark in G. R. Elton's review of *Lawyers in Early Modern Europe and America*, edited by Wilfred Prest, which appeared in your issue of March 6.

Professor Elton, in considering the essay on the Scottish Faculty of Advocates in this volume, remarks that "it fascinates by demonstrating that before the sixteenth century Scots law simply did not exist". The author of that essay, one of the understated, would like to disassociate himself from this statement. The essay is about the Scottish legal tradition and the public role of the Faculty of Advocates in early modern Scotland.

The sixteenth century was indeed a critical period of change for the Scottish legal system – for its lawyers, for its institutions and for the substantive content of the law. This change is reflected in the writings of Sir John Glens and Sir Thomas Craig at the end of the century and its results were

finally systematized in the work of Stair already referred to. The nature and extent of this change have yet to be fully researched, but it is clear that the process was one of change and not of creation. The creation of the common law of Scotland was an achievement, again yet to be fully researched, of the Middle Ages, and Professor Elton's comment does serious injustice to the development of Scots law and the Scottish legal tradition.

ALEXANDER MURDOCH.
HECTOR L. MACQUEEN.
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Charles Darwin

Sir. – In his review of Darwin's *The Zoology of the Voyage of HMS Beagle* (April 17), Redmond O'Hanlon mentions Darwin's recording "the persistent smell about his silk pocket-handkerchief of a buck whose skin he had carried home in it" (every time, when first unfolded, for a space of one year and seven months, I distinctly perceived the odour. This appears an astonishing instance of the permanence of some matter, which... must be most subtle and volatile).

It may be of interest to record that I have in my possession a large silk handkerchief, formerly the property of Darwin with his initials in one corner. This relic of C. D. belonged to my late wife, née Margaret Darwin, younger daughter of Darwin's second son, George, and had been preserved for at least a century in a small box with three drawers, covered in red leather, always known as "little Annie's box". Annie was Darwin's daughter Anne Elizabeth, who died in 1851 aged nine. The handkerchief now has a faint, unidentifiable fragrance, though I do not know if this can be associated with the smell of a newly killed buck, but it is at least inoffensive.

It would seem that this piece of silk is likely to have some special interest for Darwin, kept carefully folded for so long and passed on in the family in association with a relic of so much sentimental significance. A leather pocket in the lid of the box and the three drawers contain only locks of hair from various members of the family, a collection of shells probably made by the child Annie, and some scraps of writing, none with any reference to the silk handkerchief.

GEORGE KEYNES.
Lanimes House, Brinkley, Newmarket, Suffolk.

Sir Joseph Banks

Sir. – In his note on the Joseph Banks papers (April 10), Redmond O'Hanlon claims that the papers of Sir Joseph Banks, currently held in San Francisco, "are expected to enjoy their air-conditioned, humidified, temperature-controlled cossetting in perpetuity". Alas, they can do no such thing, at least if they stay in that city. It surely cannot have escaped the notice of even the largely non-scientific readership of the *TLS* that San Francisco lies in one of the world's major seismic zones. Much of that city was destroyed in the earthquake and fire of 1906; and it will certainly be razed to the ground again sometime, probably within the next hundred years and possibly even within the next few decades. For there is no such thing as an earthquake-proof building; or if there is, no one is quite sure what it looks like. Of course, in a seismic catastrophe the Banks papers could survive by chance; but I wouldn't bet on it. I only hope that someone has thought to microfilm the collection and deposit a copy as far away from California as possible.

PETER J. SMITH.
Editor, *Open Earth*, 32 St James Close, Hampole, Milton Keynes MK14 7LP.

The price of *The Music of Alexander Goehr*, edited by Bryan Northcott, which was reviewed in the *TLS* of February 20 is £5.95 not £2.95.

The *TLS* of April 30, 1981, reviewed Wyndham Lewis's *The Diabolical Principle* and the *Diabolical Spectator*, published by Chatto and Windus at seven shillings and sixpence.

Mr Wyndham Lewis, in "Paleface" and "Time and Western Man", set a standard for his pamphleteering work which, to be frank, is the latest example of his industry scarcely surprising. It is nothing like so admirable a piece of writing as "Paleface", and it lacks the critical solidity and comprehensiveness of the other. In fact, it is not only loose and repetitive in form and writing, but above all inconclusive: continually starting hares it makes no real attempt to kill, or, indeed, do more than snipe at fitfully and inaccurately as they run.

What the two portions of the present volume have in common is that each attacks a contemporary tendency judged by Mr Lewis to be inimical to art. "The Diabolical Principle" denounces its politicalization. "The

Fifty years on...

Diabolical Spectator, much less pointedly, its democratization. Mr Lewis stands unequivocally for the freedom of the artist "to act and to think non-politically in every thing," to preserve upon all issues an essentially individualistic and undemocratic detachment. What is more novel, and more surprising, is his implied claim to complete isolation in taking such a point of view. In the Anglo-Saxon world to-day, he declares, "all the best artists are engaged in some form or other of political revolutionary propaganda", and he takes as an example the case of the "Parisian-American periodical" – now defunct – called *Transition*, and its editors, Messrs. Paul and Jolas. Quoting principally from their intentionally combative editorial manifestos, and from the work reprinted in their pages, of the mid-nineteenth century romantic and "diabolical" prose-poet, Isidore de Laungrèmont, he does not find it difficult to establish a case against the magazine as a disguised political organ – anti-intellectual, anti-individualist, anti-consciousness. He is willing to allow them their political, but resents their artistic, "to be artists 'simply and solely' attacking themselves" when what really attracted "Paul and his friends to work of art is mainly whether, by a levered and violent attitude, it conforms to their requirements for power at all events. It is not the art that sets them off. It is something different from art."

The problem suggested has always been a real and, for artists themselves, a vital one; but unfortunately, even if Mr Lewis is to be regarded as proving his case, that takes no one very far. He himself seems never to make up his mind exactly upon the importance or otherwise of the writers to whom he gives so much space – he contradicts himself upon the point; but his apparently prevailing view appears in the statement that "Paul and Jolas are the names of notions, associated with other (and far more powerful) notions; that is, that they are significant as they are representative of tendencies embodied in larger figures. But in that case he cannot, for all his protests, be excused from the duty of confronting these more ponderable antagonists in person and in detail, though he has done so he could scarcely have failed to realize the absurdity of imputing a political motive to so intensely subjective a writer as the late D. R. Lawrence, or, for that matter, to the current fashion for derogatory biography.

Mr Lewis is a writer of undoubted powers, but also of some irritating mannerisms: his habit of labelling as "romantic" almost any claim to express upon points nearly reads out of context would willingly allow him his impudence upon his own unlikeliness and isolation. These are but trifles. The vital flaw which renders "The Diabolical Principle" so much less effective than it might and should have been is its failure to establish a reader's any real confidence in the author's claim for the artist – that is, for himself. *The Diabolical Principle* is certainly a suggestive, even illuminating, sometimes amusing volume, but it is altogether too personal, too wilful and, especially too purely negative to be really satisfying.

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John Coates

هَذَا مِنْ الْقُرْآنِ

If Goeben cannot reasonably be held responsible for German misunderstanding about the extent and nature of British military and moral commitment to the Entente from July-August, 1914, neither did he show any unusual initiative. His diary shows a competent public servant overtaken by events beyond his grasp. As A. J. P. Taylor wrote of von Jagow, Goeben was "a ruthless diplomat", nothing more. Much the most interesting part of this splendidly edited document is Professor Howard's introduction, which fills out the historical background required to materials in the Foreign Office papers and the royal archives. Here we are offered illuminating insight into the world crisis by a later historian, like the contemporaneous record of a participant, generally failed to provide. The twentieth century is often over-documented in the London series; medievalism predominates. At least the skill of the editor has ensured that the representative of modernity here is another Goeben, who will not too easily be forgotten.

The corporate spirit

By George Rudé

WILLIAM H. SEWELL:
Work and Revolution in France
The Language of Labor from the
Old Régime to 1848
340pp. Cambridge University Press.
£20 (paperback, £6.95).
0 521 23442 5

In this book William H. Sewell makes an important contribution to the twenty-year-old discussion, in which Americans have played a distinguished part, concerning the evolution of French working-class ideology from its origins to the first socialist-orientated revolution of 1848. In the past, it has commonly been assumed that in France, as in Britain, the decisive turning-point in that evolution must be sought in the birth of the factory system in the early nineteenth century. Sewell rejects this notion and argues that the nineteenth century labour movement was born in the craft workshop, not in the dark, satanic mill. Here he is on common ground with others, but he notes further that the skilled craftsmen, who continued to predominate even in the 1840s, when the French industrial revolution, with its new pressures and values, was already under way, were still using the idiom and organization of the eighteenth century. Therefore, logically, he insists that the origin of the workers' "ideological discourse" of 1848 must be traced back not merely to the Restoration or the Revolution but to the corporate system and corporate language of the old régime.

So the story begins with the corporation, or privileged communities, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The journeyman's brotherhood, or *compagnonnages*, emerged from the older bodies as a protest against the exclusiveness of the master craftsmen; but these, too, were cast in the same mould and the journeymen were no less inclined than the masters to tolerate the intrusion of strangers whom they spent as much time fighting as they spent defending their own wages and conditions of work. This corporate spirit, in its narrowest and most exclusive form, survived until the Revolution. But long before that, spokesmen for the Enlightenment had denounced the corporations as being divisive and a challenge to individual freedom and to reason; and Turgot, when in office, tried,

though unsuccessfully, to destroy them altogether.

The task was completed by the revolutionaries of 1789, men who, like Turgot, had been reared on Physiocratic doctrine coupled with a belief in the total freedom of property. The Le Chapelier law completed the process in June 1791 by its head-on assault on the workers' "coalitions" and put a stop not only to the older craft-oriented *compagnonnages*, but to such new experiments in workers' organization as the newly formed Fraternal Union of Carpenters as well. In fact, whether the legislators (as Marx and others have assumed) were prompted by a deliberate anti-labour bias or merely ignored the existence of a labour movement ("la question ouvrière") at that time, their decision served to muzzle trade unions for generations to come.

The *sans-culottes* of 1793, who included both masters and journeymen, were, with their firm attachment to the "One and indivisible" Republic, no more inclined than the Constituents before them to tolerate corporations in any shape or form. But, Sewell argues, they had by no means abandoned the old collective morality, and their hostility to

the rich and to the unrestricted right of property were such (he adds) that "one can still hear certain distinctive accents of the pre-revolutionary gens de métier in the new political language of the *sans-culottes*". But the *sans-culottes*, while championing the cause of all who worked with their hands, spoke for both journeymen and masters; yet as industrial society developed with its exaltation of private property and with the juicy plums it offered to the rich, the workers became poorer and, for their protection, they formed new corporations — *compagnonnages* and mutual-aid societies — which, while not reverting to the rigidity of the old corporate system retained the corporate idiom and exclusiveness of the past.

The revolution of July 1830 brought a decisive change. The liberties of the worker — to work and to organize — now appeared to be at profound variance with the liberties proclaimed by the bourgeoisie. The outcome was the appearance of the first working-class newspaper and the abandonment by the *Lyonnais* silk-workers of the exclusive *compagnonnage* for the wider association, embracing the workers of all crafts and, with it, the enrolment of skilled workers (both in Paris and at Lyon) into Republican Societies. So, by

1833, the craftsmen had begun to be class-conscious, to term themselves "prolétaires" and to voice their demands in both political and economic terms. Moreover, their struggle for association had inspired a new breed of *philosophes* — men like Cabet, Proudhon and Blanc — to write political tracts addressed to the workers and couched in the new idiom of socialism which, while penned by middle-class theorists, owed a great deal to the practical activities of the workers themselves.

And this was the message that the craftsmen in France's industrial cities brought with them into the revolution of 1848, as they marched (for the first time) behind their own banners and chanted their own slogans that called for the Organization of Labour by Association and for the Democratic and Social Republic. Their universalist dream of creating a republic based on fraternal societies — one that would absorb rather than destroy the employers — was short-lived. The craftsmen were still relatively few in number; they had as yet little support in the village; and they went down to defeat in June 1848.

Dr Sewell has given us the first serious attempt to construct a "mak-

ing" of the French working class which, after E.P. Thompson's dual study in England, has been long overdue. But the French are given to writing long books and to focusing on a few years at a time. So a work of synthesis of this sort, in which the author has added to his own work to the artisans of Marseille the fruits of the studies of Soboul on 1793, of Pinkney, Bezucha and Newman on 1830s and of Amann, Gossez, Pons and Agulhon on 1848, is welcome indeed. Sometimes, perhaps he is too keen to stress the continuity linking the old régime with all three revolutions, as for example in his insistence (against Soboul) that because the *sans-culottes* of 1793 championed all who laboured with their hands, they were therefore, as heirs to the one-time *gens de métier*, champions of Labour as well. This was not so, as became evident when the alliance of small masters and journeymen within the *sans-culottes* broke up in the following summer under the strains imposed upon them by the Maximum Général (prices control).

Other shortcomings may occur to others; but it is doubtful whether their weight will be sufficient to deter the reader from judging this excellent book that will be indispensable reading for students of French working-class history.

the tone by declaring the Kingdom of France his "by inheritance and acquisition". He had won a bitter war of succession, and used the words "I have established the state." At the outbreak of the period, the negotiations to end the prolonged war of the Spanish Succession were delayed by conflicting ideologies, the Allies favouring the view of kingship as a transferable office, which Louis XIV was reluctant to concede. The Peace of Utrecht of 1713 contained the renunciation by Philip V of his rights of inheritance to the French throne. The treaty was not only a breach of promise (as late as 1711, Louis XIV had told Philip that he was French king) but it was a restriction on the fundamental laws of the French monarchy, and one, moreover, that could have proved unworkable had not the five-year-old Louis XV, the second of Louis XIV's great-grandsons, by chance survived until 1774.

Rowen discusses the writings of political theorists (particularly Locke) who give short measure to Louis XIV and does not mention Domini, but rightly stresses that discussion of proprietary issues was very much a response to events — characteristically, it arose when a debate over succession occurred. As the author of the definitive biography of Louis XIV, Rowen provides, as one might expect, new and important insights into the claims and counter-claims in the War of Devolution of 1667-68 (though, surprisingly, the Franco-Dutch treaty of 1662 is mis-dated). He also provides a different emphasis on the origins of the war of the Spanish Succession, French acceptance of the will of Charles II, while recognizing Philip V's residual right to the French throne, broke not only the second partition treaty but the formal provisions of the will that the two crowns be "forever separate". Louis XIV's announcement of acceptance of Philip's claim to the throne (Philip's "birth" called him to the crown, as well as the late king's testament) illustrates Rowen's view that the theory of kingship as office, which could be bequeathed by Charles II, was an alternative to the proprietary view; and, one which ultimately triumphed.

There is little doubt in Kedourie's mind that the movement for change was the desire to emulate Europe and to counter-productive attempts to imitate a legacy of European "civilization" which aggravated the political and social divisions within the Islamic world. The reason for this was the mudslinging and misrepresentation of both Muslims and Christians by the West, which was a key factor in the Islamic revival. The Islamic revival was a response to the political and social divisions within the Islamic world, which were exacerbated by the West's misrepresentation of both Muslims and Christians.

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The new fundamentalists

By Abbas Kelidar

ELIE KEDOURIE:
Islam in the Modern World and
Other Studies
332pp. Mansell. £10.
0 7201 1570 1

In *Islam in the Modern World* and *Other Studies* Elie Kedourie offers a penetrating analysis of the motives, methods, and consequences of the modernization movement in the Islamic world, concentrating mainly on the Middle East. Not all the seventeen studies which he has collected in this volume are directly related to Islam but the general theme of interaction between Muslim societies and the West runs right through the book.

Initially, it was a loss of confidence by the Muslims, no longer able to maintain the momentum of their religious conquest and expansion, which induced them to look to the West for guidance; a move that led to important changes in military and government organizations. However, European power could not be preserved indefinitely and its decline contributed to a rekindling of political activism and, at the same time, to an Islamic resurgence.

The change occurred essentially because of a shift in the balance of power between Islam and the West. The successes of their armies against the infidel Europeans up until the end of the seventeenth century served to strengthen the Muslims' belief in the superiority of their way of life and in the validity of their faith as the ultimate divine revelation to men, "corrective", indeed, of those that had preceded it. But, the

of European power undermined Muslim belief in their military prowess, and European territorial expansion led to the adoption by Islam of European ways and methods in the reorganization of military forces and government departments. The formerly despised, indigenous European now became an admired teacher and guide.

The effect of this development was twofold. It created a ground swell of latent resentment against the Europeans for undermining the time-honoured ways in which Muslims had conducted their affairs. Moreover, the changes imposed meant greater demands being made by the state on the subject, and the consolidation of the unchecked powers now at the disposal of a highly authoritarian, centralized government. Kedourie does not believe that the reform of the administration in Egypt under Muhammad Ali, or the *Tanzimat* of the Ottoman State, necessarily meant an unequalled or universal improvement. It did not make visibly for better government, nor strengthen the state against foreign encroachment and intervention. He argues that as the reform acquired a momentum and dialectic of its own, and extended beyond the confines of the military establishment, it served only to enhance autocratic rule. Reform may have been inspired by the example of a powerful and prosperous Europe, where the citizen enjoyed freedom under the law, but "Mehmed Ali, the modernizer" writes Kedourie, "became literally the owner of Egypt". Elsewhere in the Muslim world reform caused greater impoverishment among the peasantry, and led to civil and religious strife.

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tion between the spiritual and the temporal realms; religious and secular activities are the two complementary sides of religious law. "Islam", the author writes, "is not only the badge of Muslim society, it has remained, until the very recent past, the constitutive and regulative principle of Muslim life in its temporal as well as its spiritual concerns." Under Islam authority emanates from God; it must be exercised in the service of God and to the welfare of religion. The application of religious laws would ensure universal justice, happiness, and salvation. Muslims do not need to concern themselves with the dynamics of the state in the abstract or with comparative constitutions. It is incumbent on Muslim rulers to secure the obedience of the faithful to the tenets of their religion.

Thus the state in Islam becomes a theocracy, a community of believers administered according to the divine will. In the first instance, the executive commissioner of this will was the Prophet Muhammad, who until his death was the source of all legitimate action, legislative, executive, and judicial. His prophetic status could not be shared by his immediate successors but, whether for political convenience or through religious obligation, they were charged to protect the faith and ensure compliance with its rules and regulations. New situations have had to be dealt with in accordance with analogy, consensus, or consultation, in order to enforce conformity. The guiding principle was the Revelation and the precedent set by the Prophet.

Kedourie believes that we should not overestimate the extent to which the modern states of the Muslim world have drifted away from religion. For the apparent divorce between politics and religion has not amounted to the adoption of secular

concepts of power and authority; nor has it led to the abandonment of religious ethics, which continue to serve as the basis of all legislation. He cites a prominent Muslim jurist to the effect that "Religion is a foundation and rule a guardian: what has no foundation is destroyed, and what has no guardian is lost". Obedience to the Prophet was mandatory, but after him obedience to the head of state had to be justified on the grounds of necessity, especially as the Muslim community experienced unjust and tyrannical rulers. Any ruler was better than none, since only an established order could provide the conditions conducive to eternal salvation. Theoretically, only one limitation was imposed on the powers of a ruler: he had to conform to the Revelation. No institution or constitutional framework could curb him, only his fear of God. Since no man is in a position to control an authority derived from God, the contention that government must be subject to the general body of believers was rejected early on in Islamic history, leaving no room for constitutionalism or for theories of representation and popular consent.

On these grounds Kedourie dismisses, as tenuous and invalid, the view, held by some Orientalists and some Muslim thinkers alike, that Islamic ideology never found its proper and articulated expression in the political institutions of the Islamic state. And he regards the attempts made by some Muslim leaders to inject a humanist conception into the Islamic political legacy, according to which man makes himself the master of his own destiny and is therefore free from the constraints of Muslim principles of authority, to be far removed from orthodox Islam, from whose point of view the quest for a

secular renovation of society is unacceptable, and the search for an amalgam between the tenets of Islam and Western civilization a wasted effort. These attempts, coupled with the economic deprivation which accompanied the modernization process, have produced a strong fundamentalist reaction in Islam, which can only be characterized as a movement to recapture the simplicity and purity of the original "message" to Muhammad. The advocates of this movement look upon the period of the Prophet as the golden age, an ideal state which they strive to recreate. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Colonel Gaddafi in Libya, and Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, represent three variants of the one ambition. They are primarily concerned to revive the original activity, the warrior spirit of early Islam, so that the objective conditions of their societies can be radically changed. They seek to reverse the tendency which has contributed so much to Muslim decline and led to their domination by Western powers. Western imperialism and capitalism are thus identified as the chief causes of moral corruption and decadence and as constituting a deadly threat to Islam as a religion and a way of life.

Kedourie examines Khomeini's thesis on Islamic Government. The Ayatollah aims at theocratizing the state and politicizing the religious teachers, the *Mujtahids*, of the *shari'* Muslim community, so transforming them into soldiers of God. There is little doubt that he represents a departure from the accepted quietist approach to the question of political power among the *shis*, who have in the past remained content to await the reappearance of the "missing imam", whose return will inaugurate an age of absolute justice and complete righteousness.

The other studies in this collection cover a variety of subjects on which Kedourie's views are challenging and his judgments categorical. They range from the biographies of T. E. Lawrence and the position of the United Nations on Algerian independence, and the crisis in the Lebanon. British and American policy in the Middle East, and particularly the attitude of certain officials responsible for its formulation over the question of Palestine and of peace-making, is closely examined. He is contemptuous and dismissive of the political considerations which led British officials to "Arabize" the Palestine problem when it was a purely British responsibility. Their concessions to Arab meddling and interference made the Arab-Israeli conflict infinitely more difficult. British equivocation encouraged all parties concerned to augment their demands. The prevarications of British officialdom are contrasted with the preconceived notions of the Americans and are shown to have been detrimental to the interests of their respective countries. Kedourie believes that the status of imperial or superpower imposes certain obligations which must not be shirked, yet the American approach to the security of the Middle East, with its marked anti-imperialist predilections, has rendered their policy in the region paradoxical and often untenable.

Kedourie's style is elegant, his interpretations are pungent, his conclusions are provocative. In the last essay in the volume, which argues for the importance of diplomatic history, he tells us how he himself became involved in modern Middle Eastern studies. He is now one of the world's most respected authorities on that area and those concerned with it may either applaud or disapprove of his work, but they cannot ignore it.

Collaborating with the Condominium

By Thomas Hodgkin

BABIKR BEDRI:
The Memoirs
Volume II
Translated and edited by Yusuf Bedri and Peter Hogg.
379pp. Ithaca Press. £11.50.
0 703729 60 1

Babikr Bedri, probably the greatest Sudanese educationalist of his generation, died in 1964 at the good age of 94. His autobiography, written in Arabic during the last ten years of his life, falls conveniently into three volumes, each dealing with a distinct epoch in the history of the Sudan and his own personal history. Volume I, published by the Oxford University Press in 1969, gave a fascinating account of the period of the Mahdiyya from the standpoint of one who was a committed Mahdist, a combatant, a Sufi, a scholar, a trader, a family man. Volume 2, which has had to wait ten years to find its publisher, throws the same kind of sharp personal light on the earlier period of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, from 1898 to 1929, during most of which Babikr was working within the colonial educational system, as teacher or school inspector. Volume 3 (one hopes it will not be necessary to wait another decade for that) is concerned with Babikr's involvement with the independent school movement in the Sudan during the last twenty-five years of his life and the founding of the Al-Farooq complex of schools in Omdurman, which remain his permanent memorial.

What was it that made Babikr so remarkable as a person, so lovable as a writer? Farid Dick Crossman, *Times* reviewer, said that he was a "born teacher, though he seems to have tumbled into his career as an educator almost by accident."

den, having failed to establish himself as a trader in gum Arabic. By good organization and propaganda he got a school started at Rufa'a, on the Blue Nile, where he had settled, in 1902 and was appointed Headmaster at a salary of £2 a month (he had hoped for £5, but would have felt "happy to teach in his home town with no salary at all"). He knew the Holy Qur'an by heart, and arithmetic, and the manual of merchants, and he took himself off immediately by donkey to Khartoum (some seventy miles distant) for a quick self-imposed training course, in which he learnt about "materials, methods and equipment", blackboards and chalk and rulers and exercise books — and of course gym.

But his most important contribution came four years later, in 1907, when, in the face of official discouragement and local opposition, he opened, under his own name and at his own expense, the first secular school for girls, with seventeen pupils, "nine from my own household and the rest from local citizens of Rufa'a", from which most later developments in the girls' education stemmed. Babikr had indeed the great advantage that he was blessed with numerous intelligent daughters. Some years later, when the Rufa'a girls' school had been officially recognized, it was visited by Humphrey Bowman, then a school inspector. Six of Babikr's eleven daughters were at school. "Every time he noticed a particularly bright girl he asked me whose daughter she was and I said she was mine; in this way he picked out all six of my daughters."

One of Babikr's admirable qualities was a basic integrity which enabled him to raise all problems to first principles, Islamic first principles. He could lead him, to naturally, which might be described as liberal and conservative in different situations, for example on the question of relations between the sexes. When at the age of sixty-two he was lying near death, having

fallen off a runaway camel on a tour of inspection in Halfa Province, he defied convention and shocked his host by asking for the women of the household to come and talk to him, explaining: "My pulse is weak and the only thing that will strengthen it is food and enjoyment. Food I cannot take; but if the girls come and talk to me and laugh, my heart will beat and pump the blood round faster and stronger and I shall begin to regain my strength. As there is no doctor here, please let me try my idea."

On the other hand, when ordered by his superiors in the Education Department to allow the girls in the Teachers' Training School to watch the annual sports day of the Gordon College boys, he refused in the sternest terms, on political as much as moral grounds (though later negotiating an honourable compromise): "Do you think I can be intimidated into obeying an order of which I disapprove? I fought in the battles of Khartoum on a Monday, of Tishah on a Saturday, of Karari on a Friday. On any of these days I might have died. The lifetime of service which I have given you is but a bonus which could not have been counted on."

Of course Babikr remained at heart a Mahdist, while preceding *hijabiyah* (precautionary dissimulation) and finding in education the most hopeful opportunities offered to a patriot in a colonial situation. Every now and then he said what he really thought. When James Currie, the Director of Education, had raised his salary to £6 a month after six years he explained: "It is natural that I should be loyal to you for your generosity but the Sharia's Law forbids me to love you because you are an infidel. So I am torn by a conflict of loyalties. Any man of my age who didn't say the same thing, he added, would be deceiving you — to which Currie sensibly replied: "Don't tell this to everyone, but store it up in your mind for God alone." And, when a tiresome British District

Inspector criticized him for teaching a class in political geography that the government was wise (particularly for importing corn from India during the 1914 famine), but not just, he gave him a helpful Socratic lesson on the nature of wisdom and justice: "wisdom endures and is constant, but justice, of a truth, requires that all salaries paid by the Government should be the same."

One is in fact constantly amazed by Babikr's power of adapting his life, activities and ideals to the conditions imposed by the colonial regime, the insistence of officials and of the miseries associated with camel allowance and displacement allowances and the unfulfilled hopes of a grade 4 post. But he was such a marvellously outgoing person that he derived much satisfaction, clearly, not only from teaching and starting new schools, but from his great journeys as an inspector of *Khartoum*, travelling round the country with his slave girl and his donkey, enjoying the company of British governors, Egyptian *ma'muns*, holy men and members of his own widely ramified family and clan (the Rubatab). In a sense Babikr was what is nowadays called a "collaborator" — who collaborated on his own terms and for his own purposes: remote from monsters with names like "Neotraditional Elite" that haunt the sociological models of collaboration beloved of academics.

The translation seems to me excellent, though the poems (which Babikr was in the habit of composing in moments of crisis) read somewhat oddly. G. N. Sanderson's introduction is on a grander scale than this volume of the memoirs really requires, but is in itself an important contribution to the administrative and political history of the period.

TRANSLATED BY DR. JAMES CURRIE. 17p. ITHACA PRESS, 1979. Pp. 379. ISBN 0 703729 60 1. Ithaca Press, New York, NY, USA.

The twice restored

By Irene Collins

PHILIP MANSSELL:
Louis XVIII
497pp. Blond and Briggs. £18.95.
0 85634 093 6

Louis XVIII would not be everyone's choice of subject for a biography. The impression he has left upon history is that of an elderly, cross-eyed Bourbon whom the Allies placed upon the throne of his ancestors in 1814 because they could find no suitable alternative: a man so totally out of touch with post-revolutionary France that he could describe himself as having become king by hereditary right as good as the little son of the guillotined Louis XVI and died in prison a monarch who so signally failed to endow himself to the subjects that within a year he was obliged to flee the country while the French — once more — accepted Napoleon, a sorry figure, brought back to France in the baggage train of the Allies, which patriotic Frenchmen started under their defeat at Waterloo, a shrewd man, who maintained some sort of constitutional government in order to avoid going on his travels again but who embor-

passed his supporters by displaying gentle fondness for his favourite, Minister Decazes, and who later, when gangrene had set in, and his toes were falling off, turned to religion under the influence of a bigoted mistress.

Philip Manssell's Louis is a more credible figure, however, than this historical caricature. As a young prince at the frivolous court of Marie Antoinette, Louis's studious, prudent outlook made him seem older than his years. His gentleness and adaptability were too easily construed as cynicism and cowardice. His flight from France in 1793, though not noble, was understandable given his view that royal power could only be saved by putting down the revolution and starting again, with a guarantee from above. His exile in England confirmed his belief that constitutional practices could buttress monarchy. In 1814 Louis displayed his usual mixture of occasional tactlessness and overall good manners: the return of Napoleon was the fault of the army rather than of the king, and he tactfully endured the episode rather than plunging the country into civil war. As for the business with Decazes, Louis was a childless and childless man, who wanted someone he could regard as a son. His fondness did not prevent him from accepting Decazes's resignation when the public outcry following the

murder of Berri resulted in electoral triumphs for the ultra-royalists. By the time the latter came to power under Villèle they had become more moderate than in the days of the Chambre Intransigable: when Louis died the only cloud on the horizon was the growing power of the Church, which he had always favoured.

The scholarly nature of Mr Manssell's book is to some extent belied by the phrases he often uses, reminiscent of a children's story. Louis's early life, we read, was grim and rather sad; the garden of one of his mysterious places, "Louis eventually grew to large that he became 'the father king of France' there had ever been". Still, it means that interesting little pieces of information kept slipping away might easily have been a dull subject. Louis, we learn, was not given a name until he was six; as a boy he was not allowed to learn English because his mother considered it immoral; as a young man his passion for collecting furniture led him to buy 574 beds and 255 armchairs in the space of five days. It is also true about his toes dropping off.

This is a biography, not a "life and times", and the political history of the period is kept suitably in the background. Manssell's account of it is generally acceptable, though his

possibly exaggerated the part played by royalist sentiment in the restoration of the monarchy and he underestimates the liberal aspects of Louis's policies, especially concerning the press. This is not meant to imply that Louis was reactionary. On the contrary, as Manssell convincingly shows, he realized that Napoleon had strengthened monarchical institutions; he appreciated Napoleon's centralized administration and wanted to keep the Napoleonic electoral system, which would have allowed him to choose members of parliament from lists drawn up by electoral colleges. He admired Napoleon's buildings and furnishings, and wanted to hang on to the treasures Napoleon had plundered from other countries. Far from wishing to return to the *ancien régime*, he liked France as he found it in 1814.

Manssell does not pretend to understand all of the king's motives, nor does he ever have understood them. His assessment of Louis's final achievement, "The throne had never been more secure", is not borne out by his later admission that a foolish succession could ruin the edifice in a few years. He shows better judgment when he suggests that the circumstances of Louis's abdication in England in 1807 were typical of his whole career: "appealing obstacles, there is a sense of duty and a sense of duty."

There is little doubt in Kedourie's mind that the movement for change was the desire to emulate Europe and to counter-productive attempts to imitate a legacy of European "civilization" which aggravated the political and social divisions within the Islamic world. The reason for this was the mudslinging and misrepresentation of both Muslims and Christians by the West, which was a key factor in the Islamic revival. The Islamic revival was a response to the political and social divisions within the Islamic world, which were exacerbated by the West's misrepresentation of both Muslims and Christians.

The goums of Swat

By Charles Madge

FREDRIK BARTH:

Selected Essays
Volume I: Process and Form in Social Life
243pp. £13.95. 0 7100 0720 5
Volume II: Features of Person and Society in Swat - Collected Essays on Pathans
190pp. £12.95. 0 7100 0620 9
Routledge and Kegan Paul

Fredrik Barth is a social anthropologist with an uncommon skill in discerning the social constraints under which individuals work out their destinies. His two volumes of *Selected Essays* provide a good means of judging his quality and originality. The first volume brings together most of his more general writings, and the second includes nearly all his work on Swat, apart from the monograph *Political Leadership among*

Swat Pathans (1959). Each volume also includes a substantial new essay, the first on "Models reconsidered", the second on "Swat Pathans reconsidered".

The essays on "Models of social organization", based on lectures given at the London School of Economics in 1963, are not the work of a man who enjoys methodological elaboration for its own sake. Barth writes "The level of complexity and sophistication reached in these essays is very low." They are more of a call to order, a plea for theory to be minimal rather than maximal: "I believe that the study of social anthropology cannot today be advanced much by sophistication and refinement of its current total stock of concepts and ideas." He agrees that his models "lack cognitively satisfying completeness, unity and closure" and admits that they have sometimes been criticized "as being partial, incomplete and over-simplified." Their merit surely is that they do not stand in the way of further development, and do not combine to form a closed system.

In an encyclopaedia article in 1968, Edmund Leach pointed to them as likely to prove fruitful in developing the concept of social structure.

Although he discourses lucidly on co-variation, generative models and the Theory of Games, Barth never strays far from observed empirical reality. His working concepts are simpler and more direct than the terminology might suggest. They are Barth's way of explaining the particular vision which he brings to his ethnography and which is part of what he calls his "research focus". The notion of a "generative model" helps him to avoid an unduly limiting choice between the actual and the historical, between structure and process. As he puts it, "Any close demarcation of my object of study in space and time seemed only to cut me off from interesting and illuminating data." One is soon persuaded of his marked personal gift for simultaneous observation and interpretation. It almost looks as though the theories and models are, at least in part, a rationalization of a rather special and productive sort of research temperament.

Barth's vision reveals not only existing social forms, but the processes by which they have been generated. It is this which makes the material from Swat so exciting. But why Swat? "Perhaps," he writes in the introduction to the second volume, "the experience of Swat Pathans has at times unduly domi-

nated my general understanding of Man." But as he further explains at the beginning of his masterly concluding essay "Swat Pathans reconsidered", "The point is that Swat—both in recent historic times and at the time of my fieldwork in 1954—is not only a very different world from the everyday life experience of most of us; it is also quite different from the conditions usually depicted in anthropological reports from much of the world." In a nutshell, "data from Swat gain theoretical potential precisely because of their capacity to surprise."

Swat, in North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan, "is a secluded inter-mountain valley of great fertility, densely settled by a predominantly agricultural population." It is, or was at the time of his first visit, an anarchic area beset by faction and conflict, weak in central institutions and with major security problems for property and person. Each Swat community contains a number of unequal groups known as *goums*, which Barth, in spite of the complete absence in the area of Hindu religion, refers to as "castes", thereby bringing on himself a somewhat unprofitable controversy with Louis Dumont, who argues, I think convincingly, that caste should be considered a purely Hindu phenomenon. Local chiefs wield (or then wielded) great power, but they had to work hard first to win and then to keep it. The way in which the organization of descent groups

led to a division of each local community into two wards, and of Swat Pathan society as a whole into two conflicting halves is diagnosed with unerring insight—and, according to Barth's account of it, could be explained with the aid of generative models.

"Long separation from society in description and my analysis, took their toll over the years and gave me some doubts whether the model I had constructed of characteristic systems and processes possessed quite the force which I once thought. So, in August 1978, I chose to return to Swat for a brief revisit to check on previous understandings and observe recent changes. I proceeded directly by bus from Peshawar. . . . Barth goes on to tell of the confrontation, on a railway bridge too narrow to carry two lines of traffic, between his bus and a small van, of the impulse solution arrived at, with the help of "a young man who emerged from the back of the bus." Barth sees in this an example of a characteristic pattern of rivalry, mobilization and resolution which is recognizable again and again in a wide diversity of situations, and which is one of a small set of "deep structures" through which Swat society can be described and analysed. In his hands at least, the models work remarkably well. Of Barth's own achievement, and of the brilliance of these essays, there can be no doubt.

Norman sorcery

By Lucy Mair

JEANNE FAVRET-SAADA:

Deadly Words
Witchcraft in the Bocage
Translated by Catherine Allen
273pp. Cambridge University Press.
£17.50 (paperback, £5.95).
0 521 22317 2

In Africa it is easy to study witchcraft. Its reality is taken for granted, and it crops up all the time in everyday conversation. European scepticism is met with confident assertion. Not so in the Normandy Bocage. There, there is a hierarchy of world-views. The enlightened scientific one, manifested in doctors, school-teachers, even priests, is the source of official opinion and dismisses local "superstition" as a form of "collective delirium". People who seek help in these quarters are ridiculed at best and at worst declared insane. Ordinary folk, expecting to be laughed at, answer questions with stories of what happened to some other "backward credulous people", stories that of course they don't believe. Intermediate are those villagers who have gone from school to university; they read and ask questions of writers such as Jeanne Favret who can be expected to take them seriously.

Witches, in the Bocage as often in Africa, are believed to destroy their victims' vital force. A single misadventure can be ascribed to witchcraft in Africa, but in the Bocage it is not thought of as an explanation unless someone suffers a series of disasters to himself, his family and his possessions. Even then he must not independently name this cause, since he is assumed not to believe in it until he catches himself. He must be warned by somebody (the "annunciator") who, having been himself a victim, has been driven to the belief. Then he tells in a professional "unwitcher". This person (often but not always a woman) is credited with stronger "force" than the victim; but it may prove not to be stronger than the witch's. Some of them cannot go beyond protecting the victim; others "return evil for evil", as their clients ask them to do. Sometimes a suspect dies and dies horribly; then they know that that person was guilty. Have they then "magically caused the death"? A disturbing question.

When Mme Favret began work in her well-cocooned village in Mayenne, nobody recognized the role of disinterested enquirer. Knowledge to be used. If you ask about witchcraft, either you are a witch, or you are an "unwitcher", or you are a victim. Her first profitable lead came from a girl student who had read one of her articles and wanted to know

more about a reality which she did not doubt. But her real breakthrough was the result of pure misunderstanding. A young doctor at the nearest psychiatric hospital put her in touch with a witchcraft victim who was about to be discharged—and because Mme Favret could talk about spells without sneering he decided she must be an "unwitcher". For Mme Favret's part she thought that at last she had found a "good informant".

The greater part of *Deadly Words* is an account of her talks with Jean Babin (fictitious name) and his wife. Eventually she advised Babin to consult a "stronger" professional. He refused point-blank. Why? "Because he doesn't much believe," his wife said. It transpired that he had himself been suspected of witchcraft. As Mme Favret points out, since every victim must name a witch, in the whole community there must be as many witches as victims. The suspects know, of course, that they are innocent, all the more since in the Bocage it is not thought possible to bewitch somebody by mere hatred, which might conceivably be an involuntary use of force. Yet some who have been named as witches are not afraid of the power of the "unwitcher": that they may leave the neighbourhood or even die.

Mme Favret concludes with a discussion of the logical foundations of this complex of beliefs. It rests, she says, on the assumption that everyone has a certain measure of vital force, some more than others. Everyone, too, has a right to a certain "social space". Those with excess force must extend their space, and can only do so by invading someone else's. "Unwitchers" also have excess force, but deploy it only against witches. "In a peasant said to be stupid", Mme Favret writes, "have invented such a system implies some philosophical talent."

The ngangas' nkondes

By J. B. Donne

RAOUL LEHUARD:

Fétiches à clous du Bas-Azire
264pp. 142 black-and-white illustrations. 24 Rue Dragulgan, 95400 Arrouville-les-Gonnesse. Fr. 450. Arts d'Afrique Noire.

In 1972, Raoul Lehuard, manager in a famous firm of chain-stores, a man of great enthusiasm and enormous energy, decided to devote his life to promoting the study of African art. From Arrouville-les-Gonnesse, just outside Paris, he published the first issue of *Arts d'Afrique Noire*, a serious quarterly journal which rapidly gained an international reputation among all those concerned in any way with African art, including art historians, museum curators, dealers and collectors. Naturally, the articles it publishes, which are always very fully illustrated in black and white and are mainly orientated towards the art of the Gabon and Central Africa, vary in interest and scholarship. As do those of its American cousin, *African Arts*, a more richly endowed and colourful magazine which has been appearing from UCLA since 1967. Nevertheless, *Arts d'Afrique Noire* remains essential reading for everyone in this field and it is held in considerable respect.

As well as the journal, Lehuard has published a number of monographs, some of which, for example Marie-Louise Bakhti's *Sigillets Tchokwe du héros civilisateur 'tsibunda lunda'* are studies of the greatest importance. The latest in this series is *Fétiches à clous du Bas-Azire* by the editor and publisher himself: an investigation of the so-called "nail fetiches" of the Lower Congo. Many hundreds of these wooden male figures (some animal examples are also known) are to be found in European and American museums and private collections. They usually stand 50 cm to just over a metre high, but can range from 20 cm to life-size. The right hand may be raised and may hold a knife (often missing) in a threatening manner; but the face shows little or no expression except for an occasional protruding tongue. But their truly remarkable feature is that they have nails or other pieces of

iron driven into them, so that in some cases the entire body is hidden, to such an extent that the head, or even the face alone, is the only part of the underlying woodcarving still visible.

As the missionaries, traders and other European travellers reported at the turn of the century, these *nkondes*, as they are called in the various Kongo dialects, were used by the *nganga* (medicine-man) to bring pain, sickness or even death to his client's enemies by the implantation of a nail. But, as Lehuard rightly stresses, they were also employed to cure patients of disease. It has been suggested that this practice derived from the European custom of driving pins into a clay or wax image of the person one wishes to harm, from the legend of St Sebastian, or from representations of the Crucifixion itself, introduced by the early Portuguese. Lehuard rejects this theory on the grounds that hardly anywhere else in West Africa, apart from Abomey in Dahomey where Christ-fetich did not penetrate until the fall of the kingdom at the end of the last century, is the implantation of nails to be found, despite the presence of Portuguese and other Europeans on the coast for hundreds of years.

However, the argument works both ways. Nowhere else in West Africa, except at Benin (to the horror of the members of the British punitive expedition of 1897), was crucifixion adopted as a method of execution, or large, locally cast crucifixes hung on the outside walls of hunters' huts to act as charms long after the Portuguese missionaries had been forced to flee the country. The late J. Maas of Turvuren suggested that it might be simply a case of "convergence", and he may well have been right. Nevertheless, at present the question remains open.

It is more important to consider to what extent the *nkonde* was used for benevolent or malignant purposes. Unfortunately, the author ignores some early reports and misinterprets some of his English and German sources. He appears unaware of W. Holman Bentley's *Diary and Grammar of the Kongo Language* (London, 2 volumes, 1887, 89), with its invaluable list of "fetiches" and their vernacular names and functions; nor is he acquainted with R. B.

Dennett's *Seven Years among the Fjort* (London, 1887), with its illustrations of a *nganga* in action, his *Nkonde* beside him; or of Dennett's *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind* (London, 1906), with its chapter on "Ndogoloi", including a list of names of nail-fetiches with their uses. Bentley was a missionary who went to San Salvador in 1879. Dennett was a trader who reached the Loango Coast in 1879 or 1880. Their importance as sources reads in their fluency in their local dialects and their priority in their respective areas. Lehuard's statement that it was "at the beginning of the 20th century that observers started to speak of *nkisi* (medicinal charms) of their precise designation and their functions" needs to be amended by twenty years.

Misinterpretation is often due to mistranslation. "He is Ma'Venda" becomes the incomprehensible "Lu, Sir Venda". Of a *nkonde* whose German collector said that it "did not merely 'pourchasser' its maléfiteurs", and the wrong date of collection is given. A loose translation of a passage from a non-existent book (*Greenfield's Diary*, London, 1908) leads to a false conclusion. The reference itself is to Sir Harry Johnston's *Geography of the Congo* (London, 2 volumes, 1908), which made use of Greenfield's "diaries and researches" together with other records to compile "a history and description of the Congo Independent State and adjoining districts of Congo-Léopold".

One gets the impression that this monograph was planned along valid scholarly lines, but for some reason had to be brought to a hasty conclusion, with the result that there was no time to go deeper into the literature or to check references, translations, dates and other details. So it is that the definitive study of Kongo nail-fetiches that we might have wished for—and which we may never have, since the early reports were far from complete and by now the old traditions have been irretrievably lost—nevertheless the author's conclusions are generally sound, and are based on the perceptive inspection of several hundred pieces. This is reflected in the 142 illustrations, for which above all else this book will be valued.

Searching for fathers

By Jennifer Uglow

PETER DE POLNAY:

A Stone Throw
228pp. Planktus: Loughton, Essex.
£5.95
0 86188 0706

The story opens with a young antique dealer, Philip Hayton, engaged in an affair with Virginia, wife of an older colleague and virtual father-substitute, Paul Rectwood. Out of respect for Paul (with little regard for the lady) he agrees to end the affair and the two men arrange that he will write a letter from France saying he has fallen in love with another woman. Plan becomes prophecy. Philip borrows a house in a deep Auvergnat valley and meets Elise, educated daughter of the farm's former owner, Bernadette. During his stay Bernadette lends him the scribbled memoirs of an English resistance fighter she sheltered from the Germans.

During fifty years of fiction writing Peter de Polnay, now in his mid-seventies and author of over thirty novels, has acquired a reputation as an urbane and consistent entertainer. Here again he mixes the ingredients with conscious craft to produce an intriguing tale which maintains its pace throughout, reaching a romantically optimistic conclusion by means of some judiciously placed surprises. It is a story of trust and betrayal, of different definitions of love, and of the search for "fathers" which involves recognition of the enduring shadow of the last war (drawing indirectly on the author's own experience of the French resistance).

The charm of the book derives from

its setting, rather than its clever, if implausible plot, and from the care lavished on detail—such as the furniture which catches a dealer's eye, or the problems of housekeeping in remote valleys. The Auvergnat countryside is so lovingly described that it makes one reach impulsively for the *carte régionale*. It supports a society apparently rooted in the soil, yet where every family has at least one member in the bar-tabac trade ("la ilmonade") and where the morning mist clears slowly to reveal retired bistro owners cherishing memories of better days.

De Polnay writes of France with affectionate irony and with no hint of the snobishness which pervades his English scenes. This kind of internal contradiction is sensed throughout and results in a disturbingly uneven quality of writing. The main female characters, for example, are sympathetically portrayed as independent women, decisive and businesslike, with unusual control over their emotional lives. Yet every now and then they are subjected to blunt anatomical reductions to breasts, buttocks and thighs which seem to belong to a different kind of novel altogether. And while states of feeling are conveyed with some delicacy, the rendering of physical experience, whether sexual pleasure or wartime torture, is forced, conventional and unconvincing. Perhaps the author has been too disservice by the praises heaped on his "sheer readability", for he frequently seems to allow his facility with words to remain unchecked by any critical faculty. A casual style easily slides into a careless one; there are pages where cliché and outdated colloquialism fight to share the page.

A *Stone Throw* remains a "good read" and perhaps it is wrong to judge it against stricter criteria. Yet the

lapses irritate because de Polnay writes with ease and assurance when his interest is fully engaged—in describing the barren upbringing of an expatriate child, the comradeship with strangers which can illumine the bleakest moments of war, the nuances of obligation, loyalty and treachery. As the title suggests, this novel examines both the sort of closeness which implies distance and its converse, the apparent gulf which a chance gesture can bridge. The action is divided between England and France, and although the bilingual heroes of both stories move easily between the countries, and link them by letter, radio, telephone and telegram, finally the difference between English and French customs and qualities becomes a central tenet. The double plot has a temporal as well as geographical divide. At first there seems no link between Philip's holiday and the wartime diaries, except coincidence of place. But the diaries' revelations eventually affect the novel's outcome.

This paradoxical affinity, of which a central condition is separation, structures every aspect of the book, and the relationships depicted are variations on the theme—space and closeness between lovers, mother and daughter, husband and wife, benefactor and protégé, employer and servant, traitor and betrayed, priest and penitent. The title phrase becomes a moral metaphor made explicit in the Catholic references of the journals. How great is the distance between martyr and recusant, or between the Grace which allows forgiveness and the perpetuation of hatred—and the matters of choice or chance, nature or circumstance? De Polnay is noted for his light touch, but one cannot doubt the seriousness of the concerns which sustain this unpretentious holiday fiction.

Casting away

By Nicholas Spollar

DION DIVIGNY:

Adrift
139pp. Collins. £4.95.
0 00 261004 3

A hundred days . . . on a boat thirty-two feet in length, eight feet wide in its centre, narrowing at both ends to a point. A piece of canvas and awning for a sail, a spar and some rotten rope. Without food and water. What kind of cruelty was this? What kind of lunatic's prank could do this to them?

The plot of this novel, with its overtones of "The Ancient Mariner", is simple: it takes place on a small boat, a former whaling vessel carrying nine Seychellois passengers twenty miles from one island to another. Some of the nine, including the boat's owner, Theodore Uzeo, have been to a wedding, and the bridegroom and his fifteen-year-old wife are among the passengers, together with the middle-aged daughter of a witch, answering a summons to her mother's death-bed, and the witch's two dried-up sisters-in-law. Tawli, the sinister coxswain, has black-mailed Uzeo into taking the women, and there is much stage-business, at the beginning of the novel, about Uzeo's superstitious fears.

The events of the novel are initiated by two mechanical disasters, the failure of the engine after the gear-handle snaps, and the breaking of the chain attaching the boat to its anchor—accidents which enact the rusting of the links between the characters and civilization. The rest of the novel describes the steady drift of the boat the thousand or more miles towards Africa, and this is a journey on more than one level: the relations of the characters alter (Uzeo's son, Selby, rejects his father and his wife Dirior), and secrets are uncovered. Early on Uzeo wonders "What monster among them was being punished for some hidden crime?", and this is among the ques-

tions to be answered in the course of the novel. Though in the end the characters all meet a similar destiny, their fates demand to be interpreted in different ways: ultimately good and evil are rewarded and punished appropriately, and the journey takes on metaphysical dimensions. Tawli, the collaborator with the witch, will never reach the Africa he dreams of while Uzeo, acquiring humility, and having lost all "trace of the man who had danced at Dirior's wedding-feast", finally experiences the vision he has been seeking. This is a redemptive vision, and in the novel's semi-religious conclusion may be found a kind of justification both for the horrors of the voyage and for the human life of which it is a metaphor.

The early sections of *Adrift* are shaky, sliding towards melodrama, but the novel achieves a considerable power once it gets going, while the style, superficial and journalistic at the outset, becomes more muscular and concentrated. Overall the effect is of an eventful and entertaining piece of narration with a number of dramatic set-pieces: the killing of a turtle; a battle between a whale and a squid (shades of *Moby Dick*); a hurricane; the rescue of Selby by a passing liner; Uzeo's dreams. The boat is a microcosm of human existence, with birth—the witch's daughter, Madame Hennessy, is pregnant—and death imminent throughout. Moreover, a great variety of experience is introduced into the novel: from the eating habits of the Seychellois upper classes to the voodoo practices of Ternay, a cook, when attempting to seduce a girl.

Paradoxically, in view of its subject, *Adrift* is a celebratory of life rather than a lament over dissolution: the sense of freedom and satisfaction that Uzeo gains from writing in his journal justifies and gives meaning to existence. "Names were life", he reflects, and there is a continuity between the fluttering pages of the boat-owner's notebook and Dion Divigny's completed work. The fiction, like the journal which is its source, is an act of recovery and redemption.

Gittin' bigger

By Heather Lawton

MARY VANN HUNTER:

Sassafras
282pp. Hamish Hamilton. £7.95.
0241 105196

Children's books such as *What Katy Did* and *Rebecca at Sunnybrook Farm* must have helped form many girls' impressions of American childhood: an idyllic romantic place, filled with hot, treacly waffle breakfasts; cookies, and pickled pears; a place where a Katy or a Rebecca will clamber into a high truckle-bed covered by a patchwork quilt lovingly sewn together by a Grandmother, or a maiden aunt (who meanwhile sits in her rocking-chair, on the veranda).

The beginning of *Sassafras*, a first novel by Mary Vann Hunter, carries one immediately back into such a world. The child is nicknamed Batty, the adolescent heroine begins dating and has to learn how to fend off amorous elder gentlemen. In Part Three she goes to college; is voted the "prettiest freshman in the class" and gets serious with Plum, whom she marries at a tender age. They begin married life preppy-style in undergraduate at Chapel Hill.

Mary Vann Hunter was brought up in a small town in North Carolina, and as a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, it is reasonable to suppose that her heroine resembles many of Batty's experiences resemble her own. Curson McCullers' *Plantation* or O'Connor's *Budnots* Welty and Katherine Anne Porter have given us a picture of the American South which goes beyond the rocking-chairs, quilts and pickles; but Mary Vann Hunter fails to bring any originality of concept or language to her later version of this area of experience.

Soon, however, Batty's innocence is under threat. Her first experience of death-by-violence is the bloody slaughter of the hog "Big Boy". Batty soon has to face a few more unpleasant facts: Mother tells her she's getting "too old" to play with her coloured chums William and Caroline ("Beatrice, Louise, it's just not done"); her school mate Lulu Ann shows her a pornographic comic featuring Popeye "with a great penis" doing nasty things to a blonde lady; Lulu Ann also insists on playing a perverted version of the "dodgy game" which results in her "peeing" all over the baffled Batty's nose. After this unfortunate experience the guilt-ridden Batty symbolically castrates herself by chopping off her pigtail, having decided that in this world it is better to be a boy.

In Part Two Batty's life is further "complicated" when her father returns from the war and the family move from the country-life of the farm to the town-life of Robertson's Port. There the adolescent heroine begins dating and has to learn how to fend off amorous elder gentlemen. In Part Three she goes to college; is voted the "prettiest freshman in the class" and gets serious with Plum, whom she marries at a tender age. They begin married life preppy-style in undergraduate at Chapel Hill.

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Dreaming of spires

By Lindsay Duguid

LEO BELLINGHAM:

The Novel
256pp. Noid Johnson. £6.
0 90558 01 0

In calling his book *Oxford: The Novel* Leo Bellingham seems to be making a point. He may be concerned merely to distinguish his work from the town, the gown, the football team, the bags and the marmalade. Or is he perhaps signalling his membership of a particular category of fiction, the Oxford novel? His claim to belong to such a subcategory can be cross-checked against some impeccable sources: J. L. M. Stewart's *A Staircase in Surrey* (London, 1967), *Street* and more recent works such as Nigel Williams's *My Life Owned Twice*, and Margaret Douglas's *The Alchemists*. Established texts like *Jude the Obscure* and *Brideshead Revisited* are mentioned by Bellingham and the sole credential missing is perhaps the fact that, unlike the Oxford novels of Dorothy L. Sayers, Edmund Crispin and Michael Innes, his book does not contain a corpse.

The topography is "exact" and convincing. There is no nonsense with Oxbridge or Christminster; instead the colleges are given their proper names, locations, architects and reputations. It's probably the only novel in the university series, even the lavatories are in the right place in the Bodleian; strolls are carefully mapped; tea and coffee are taken in what is obviously a genuine pub, for a father-lead son, though the location were taking place in a book. (The blurb had to be written by the Bodleian's librarians, the only people with the authority to stand next to the Old Bodleian.) The scenes are carefully chosen, the descriptions are generally good, and are based on the perceptive inspection of several hundred pieces. This is reflected in the 142 illustrations, for which above all else this book will be valued.

important than the plot, which is little more than the narrator's reliving of his undergraduate days. William Holman, a grammar-school boy from Colchester and therefore gauche, falls in love with Isabel Jeffries who is beautiful and remote and who moves in a rather fast set of enviably self-assured ex-public school chums. From the first sighting of her in the library, William pursues Isabel diligently, amassing evidence about her—rather in the manner of an earnest PhD student—through letters, anecdotes, articles in *Isis*, and reported conversations. Much of the book is thus about class and love, and the rather rudimentary characterization means that it is not in the least surprising that in both these spheres William should eventually succeed.

Like all good Oxford novels, Bellingham's book is highly-charged with nostalgia. William, now a don and married to Isabel, looks back from security and knowledge on more uncertain times. Things are not entirely bathed in a rosy glow (though there is a scene in a punt and the necessary brandishing of champagne bottles), for what William chiefly remembers are bad parties, pointless cups of tea,

aimless visits to the cinema and endless conversations about what people are really like, all of which are described in great detail. The remote-seeming mid-1960s setting, with its miniskirts and pot as charmingly period as anything in *Zuleika Dobson*, is exactly right as a background to the undergraduates' blend of cynicism and curiosity, though there are moments when the social history threatens to overwhelm the human drama. William's story is so qualified by hindsight that it has to struggle hard for any immediacy and the distancing perspectives employed by the author, which include changes of narrative voice as various characters tell stories about Isabel, are part of a failure to involve us. There is much that is diverting along the way, including literary allusions, in-jokes, and a dry donnish wit, but it is ultimately rather hard to tell whether the whole thing is not an elaborate pastiche. The author's name also has a fictitious ring to it and suspicions are aroused by the absence of any biographical details on the dust jacket. The novel leaves one feeling like the visitor in Gilbert Ryle's famous example: "You have shown me the colleges; but where is the University?"

Crisis, post-prandial

The clock taps like a woman
high-beeing it down a tiled stair.
Moments spread slowly, raindrops in a pool.
Riffling through Time. Rindling things to do.
Changing a bulb. The filament flings
Appalachian springs.

Appalling after-dinner stupor
of Valpurgis. Spaghettis dregs
the sink like an angler's bait.

Ten past eight. Time's
slimy fracture, the arms of the clock
like a Slinka diving to strike.

Michael Hulise